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29th CPSU Congress To Open in Moscow 26 Mar

LD2503144193 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1330 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] The 29th Congress of the CPSU will open on 26 March in Moscow, at the Orion cinema and concert hall—the venue where the Comunists will hold their forum. Delegates who not only represent various regions in Russia, but also a number of the former USSR republics, will be taking part in the Congress, which will debate problems connected with the resurrection of the party, a draft new CPSU program, and the political situation in the country.

Official Favors Yeltsin-Nazarbayev Economic Union Plan

OW2503172093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1631 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Report by diplomatic correspondents Andrey Borodin, Dimitry Voskoboynikov, Igor Porshnev, and others; from the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Coordinator of the CIS working group Ivan Korotchenya doubted the advisability of following through on the initiative from Belarusian Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich to form an economic union of states based on Belarus, Russia, and Kazakhstan.

IF [INTERFAX] Note: The head of the Belarusian government made this proposal in a speech at a meeting with leaders of local organs of executive power on March 18. Kebich spoke against forming an economic union on the basis of all CIS and COMECON countries, as was proposed by Boris Yeltsin and Nursultan Nazarbayev. The Belarusian Prime Minister said there was no need to form "yet another CIS." Kebich thinks that first an economic union should be established between three states, and others could join afterwards on a voluntary basis.

In an exclusive interview with an Interfax correspondent, Korotchenya said that "the formation of a close union of three states, as envisioned by Kebich, it seems to me, will simply cancel all economic decisions reached earlier in the framework of the Commonwealth." He believes that, objectively, this "is not likely to accelerate the formation of a single economic zone, [a concept] in which every single former Soviet republic is interested today." Although Korotchenya admitted that Kebich's initiative, directed at fortifying economic ties, is entirely timely, he claimed there was no specific mechanism for fulfilling it. Korotchenya sees "serious contradictions, which could lead to undesirable consequences" in the model proposed by the Belarusian prime minister. "I mean, primarily, the circle of participants planned for the economic union," said Korotchenya.

He called "more reasonable and flexible" the initiative of Yeltsin and Nazarbayev to form an economic union based on CIS and COMECON countries. Korotchenya feels one must take into consideration the recent decision of Central Asian states and Kazakhstan, who in Tashkent documented their quest to form "a common market with one taxation, customs, price, investment, and export policy in Central Asia." Citing their personal contacts with leaders of CIS states, Korotchenya stressed that "the majority of them, like Boris Yeltsin, support forming a unified economic zone on the platform of the Byelaya Vyezha and Alma-Ata agreements, and the CIS charter as well." He said they also have not ruled out the possibility of also re-establishing mutually beneficial relations with countries earlier included in the Council for Economic Assistance, but on new principles. "And in this, it seems to me, there is a natural logic of developing business relations in the Commonwealth, taking into consideration the concrete realities which have emerged since the collapse of the socialist system of economics and the USSR," said Korotchenya.

"I fully agree with Yeltsin that it is time to form, organs within the Commonwealth to coordinate, and perhaps even fulfill several power functions, to administer the fulfillment of earlier adopted agreements," said the coordinator. "The ratification of the charter would strengthen the CIS and bring in real instruments of influence on the realization of achieved agreements," he said.

Korotchenya called the work toward forming a coordinating and consulting committee for the Commonwealth "a regular stage in the CIS's existence, proposing a new way of coordinating activities." Korotchenya believes that "the establishment of such an organ will represent a new level of relations between governments, at least on issues of economic collaboration." "While the committee will not be a super-state structure, it will take control of the fulfillment of mutual obligations, and will be able to independently make necessary decisions," said Korotchenya.

Satellite 'Progress M-16' Ends Mission

LD2603110293 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1052 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Mission Control Centre March 26 TASS—The flight of the automatic space ship "Progress M-16", which delivered two and a half tonnes of cargos to the orbit, is nearing its completion.

An experiment was carried out to test the TV control system of the transport satellite. "Progress M-16" was separated from the "Mir" complex at 09:50 hours, Moscow time.

All further dynamical operations on the orbit, including removal of the cargo ship from the station up to a distance of 70 metres with further approaching and docking with it were carried out by cosmonauts Gennadiy Manakov and Aleksandr Poleshchuk on board the "Mir" complex.

"Progress M-16" transport satellite will be separated from the space station and complete its flight on March 27.

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 26 Mar

LD2603075393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0622 GMT 26 Mar 93

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow March 26 ITAR-TASS—Russian newspapers focus their attention on the aggravation of confrontation between the legislative and executive branches of authority following President Yeltsin's TV address on March 20. They express various opinions and carry numerous comments of political and public figures, as well as letters from provinces.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI and ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA frontpage without comment the message of the Russian president to the parliament "On Compliance With Constitution." KRASNAYA ZVEZDA sets forth the message in its own words.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI carries an article entitled "March Propositions of the Speaker," in which it expounds the platform on which Ruslan Khasbulatov is going to look for accord with the president. In the opinion of the government publication, the chairman of parliament put "ultimatum-like" and "tough" demands to the president, to which "the latter answered with a firm and resolute 'no'."

According to the newspaper, the existing constitution does not make it possible to ensure a normal economic, political and legal life of the country. Neither does it gives guarantees of implementing deep-going and progressive transformations, since it is imperfect and archaic. The newspaper's conclusions are based on the analysis of the key articles of the Russian fundamental law.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, publication of the parliament, carries comments of some public and political figures about the crisis of authority. Specifically, the writer Pyotr Proskurin said: "In my opinion, it is not a crisis of authority, but the desire of the ruling elite, which deliberately destroyed economy, agriculture, industry, the financial system and culture of the country, to avoid responsibility before the nation and establish dictatorship in Russia."

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA comments on the president's decree "On the Activities of Executive Authorities Until the Overcoming of the Crisis of Power" which, as the newspaper stresses, stirred up the whole country. It calls attention to the fact that this is not the decree which was mentioned by the president in his TV address to the nation. "The decree no longer contains its key idea—to introduce 'a special regime of work of the head of the executive authority.' The confrontation provisions, directed at the Congress of People's Deputies and the parliament, accusations of the instigating activities of legislative authorities and the open shifting of the blame for political confrontation to heads of parliament were removed." The newspaper describes the president's actions as "a political manoeuvre, aimed at encouraging his opponents to take hasty action and exposing them before the nation as enemies of democracy and the reform."

PRAVDA shares this view. "It is quite probable that the 'soft' decree, in contrast to the 'tough' one, will produce a feeling of relief among some people's deputies. This will affect the developments at the 9th Congress, if the question of the president's impeachment is raised there."

"The Army should have a reliable immunity against political stresses," KRASNAYA ZVEZDA writes, commenting on the appeal of the collegium of the Russian Defence Ministry to the personnel of the Russian Armed Forces, which the newspaper frontpages. It points out that "the Army's immunity against political stresses, against being drawn into political confrontation is an important condition for the stability of the democratic system and a vitally important integral part of civilised society." The publication of the Defence Ministry stresses that attempts are being made continually to split the Army, to set officers against each other, draw them into the political struggle and provoke the army to violent actions. The newspaper points out, however, that "at the moment there is no split in the army, which is very important."

Vancouver Summit To Adopt Anti-Inflation Program

OW2503161293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1549 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In his exclusive interview with Interfax correspondent Dmitry Voskoboinikov, the Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev reported that a special G-7 meeting to discuss aid to Russia will be held mid-April in Tokyo with the participation of Foreign and Finance Ministers.

According to Kozyrev, the upcoming meeting between Boris Yeltsin and Bill Clinton, scheduled for early April in Vancouver, will help the countries to rise to a new qualitative level of cooperation. A joint program on combat with inflation in Russia is expected to be adopted at the meeting. The program will assist in stabilizing the ruble's rate and soften social consequences caused by introduction of a tougher financial regime.

"Everybody will feel this because inflation will be stopped," the Russian Minister emphasized. In the prospect these measures will be connected with the creation of a ruble stabilization fund, Kozyrev said.

Envoy to U.S. Interviewed on Summit

LD2603090193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0755 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Sergey Nikishov]

[Text] Moscow, 26 Mar—The preparations for the Russian-American summit "are going normally", said Vladimir Lukin, the ambassador of the Russian Federation to the United States, speaking in the foyer of the Ninth Congress of People's Deputies today. In an interview with an ITAR-TASS correspondent, he noted that the American side "had expressed its full desire to take part in a businesslike dialogue".

According to the ambassador, President Clinton said that "a program of specific assistance to Russia in a number of areas, rather than of general political promises," had been elaborated. The drafting of documents being submitted for the meeting is now under way. The Russian side put forward "a number of specific issues". The point, said the ambassador, is not "to say again that Americans are in sympathy with our democracy, but to determine the specific forms of U.S. assistance to us".

"All the more so, since Americans are increasingly aware that helping us is helping themselves, Lukin stressed. A calm atmosphere in the other nuclear superpower is completely in keeping with their national interests." The Russian ambassador refused to rule out that the Congress of People's Deputies could have any outcome. In this context, in his view, "any power vacuum in Russia affects our international affairs". Should the congress decide to have the president impeached, "Russia will have entered a completely unclear period and then the Vancouver summit will not be all that high on the agenda", Lukin says.

Further on Reaction to Political Crisis in Russia

Clinton Stance 'More Restrained'

PM2603100893 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 26 Mar 93 p 3

[Report by correspondent Vladislav Drobkov: "The United States Cannot Dictate Its Will, President B. Clinton Said"]

[Text] Washington, 25 Mar—Answering journalists' questions in the Oval Office on the eve of his meeting with Russian Foreign Minister A. Kozyrev, President B. Clinton stated that the solution to the Russian political constitutional crisis belongs to the people of Russia.

"Do you think there is still a possibility of compromise in Russia?" the U.S. President was asked. "That is something the Russians have to decide among themselves," Clinton replied. "I believe there is (a chance—V.D.), but this is obviously something that has to be decided by the Russian people."

This statement by the President sounded far more restrained than the calls made by certain U.S. circles for the administration to support Yeltsin in his present conflict with the Russian Supreme Soviet. Apparently the warnings from a number of presidential advisers—stepped up in recent days—"not to put all your eggs in one basket," have influenced the position of the White House chief.

At the same time Clinton reaffirmed his "support for democracy and reforms" in Russia and his desire to hold a meeting with the Russian president in Vancouver. He also stated that it is very much in America's interests to "keep Russia democratic, continue to progress toward market reforms, and continue to move toward reducing the nuclear threat." According to Clinton, "this will save the American people billions of dollars which will not need to be spent on maintaining the nuclear arsenal."

U.S., West Want 'Democratic' Russia

PM2603110693 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 26 Mar 93 p 3

[Mikhail Pogorelyy article: "We Must Solve Our Own Political Problems"]

[Text] Yes, the West is very closely observing the dramatic development of events in Russia. Yes, the leaders of foreign states are expressing their political sympathies, voicing their own opinions on the distribution of forces in Russia's ruling structures, and making predictions about the resolution of the political crisis in our country. But—and this is highly significant—nobody is

imposing their own formulas on us, so the statements by some people in our country about interference by foreign powers in the Russian Federation's internal affairs cannot be described as founded on fact.

Furthermore U.S. President Bill Clinton, summing up the results of his meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, noted frankly and unequivocally: The Russians must tackle their own domestic political problems; the United States, like any other state, is not entitled to dictate its will. Although nobody is hiding their wishes. Those wishes are primarily that Russia should remain a democratic country developing in the direction of a market economy. That is not only the strategic goal which, as Secretary of State Warren Christopher put it, the United States is pursuing, it is virtually the only possible basis for new relations of Russian-American partnership, he stressed.

Along this path of development, the world is prepared to stretch out a helping hand to us at a critically difficult time. The concrete forms and avenues of assistance to the economic reforms will be discussed in Vancouver by the Russian and U.S. presidents and most likely by the G-7 ministers in April. It should be noted that our partners take a proper view of this difficult, wide-ranging, and rather sensitive question. As Secretary Christopher formulated the idea of support, the West should extend to Russia a friendly helping hand, and not sops. Everyone knows that our country is very rich. Mainly, as yet, in terms of potential. Both economic and intellectual potential and resources. And maybe the most important and effective thing of all will be assistance in bringing our own potential into play. In order at long last to awaken the knight of the Russian land, who is sleeping on the stove...

Whatever our homegrown patriots may say, the world needs a strong and free Russia which is predictable and open to international cooperation. They will respect us for this, take us seriously, and cooperate with us. "We can work together," Jeanne Kirkpatrick, until recently the U.S. representative to the United Nations, said the other day. "If Russia continues along the path of democratic development, the problem of national security will disappear completely between the United States and Russia." And the less funds go on military needs, the more can go on people's well-being.

IZVESTIYA Rounds Up World Reaction

PM2503134593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Mar 93 First Edition pp 1, 3

[Aleksandr Sychev report: "The West Warns: Departure From Democracy Will Lead To Tragedy"]

[Text] The constitutional crisis in Russia is rapidly approaching a peak of tension beyond which things must inevitably come to a head. "Not for the first time in history are events in Russia sending shockwaves through the world arena," the Argentine newspaper LA PRENSA points out.

In the articles on the situation in Russia which constantly grace the front pages of the world press, observers, experts, and politicians do not rule out the possibility that the democratically elected Russian president may lose. And nevertheless his activities continue to enjoy total support. The pragmatic Western politicians are not attempting, as was the case at the most decisive moment of President Gorbachev's rule, to keep their options open.

Admittedly, after three days of silence, China has taken up a highly cautious stance, our Beijing correspondent reports. Foreign Minister Qian Qichen declared that the Chinese leadership is following events in neighboring Russia closely and that it hopes that stability will be established, but: "whatever happens, our policy of developing friendly and good-neighborly relations with Russia will remain unchanged."

Nevertheless, in the words of France's LE MONDE, Boris Yeltsin's "cavalryman democracy" looks to the West like the lesser evil, as the only ostensibly quasi-acceptable means of taking Russia out of anarchy. "The West has no choice." The newspaper asserts that the victory of the conservative parliament and the accession to power of "reactionary, demagogic, populist, and possibly national-communist groupings" threatens wholly tangible horrors for the world. "Even a temporary blockage in the process of democratization may cost us all dear."

Analyzing the negative consequences of the possible defeat of Yeltsin, who, to save the country, has placed his political future at the mercy of the people's court, the U.S. newspaper USA TODAY concludes that it will be possible to lay to rest the West's hopes of exploiting the dividends of peace to repair its own economic position. "The crisis in Russia may once again turn us back to thoughts of the dank days of the Cold War, when the mighty Russian bear appeared to Americans in nightmares. In a world in which the Kremlin is unsteady on its feet, the leaders of Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus will hardly be inclined to demonstrate their own strong means of deterrence."

In the opinion of well-known Canadian observer R. Guin [name as transliterated], the conflict of power has given Russia a choice: Either to become a new, gigantic Somalia, to return to its historical authoritarianism, or to continue to move along the democratic path of development. "Russia's immersion in the uncontrolled chaos of a 'devastated nation'—like Somalia—is a real possibility," Guin asserted. "A kind of 'black hole' will emerge in its place, which will broaden the crises, conflicts, and wars to world scale."

This opinion is to all intents and purposes shared by the heads of the foreign policy departments of eight countries—Austria, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Italy, and Slovenia, which form part of the so-called Central European Initiative Group. At the meeting which has just ended in Budapest, they

issued a declaration urging the West to give specific aid Yeltsin, the very personification of democratic forces in Russia, and thus all the country's democratic institutions.

In fact, today it can be said that support for a democratic Russia is moving from the level of individual countries to the level of organizations. Italian Foreign Minister E. Colombo addressed the European Community with a message proposing to resolve the problem of Russia's foreign debt within the framework of the Paris Club and to conclude a "treaty on partnership," which should reinforce the process of reorganizing the Russian economy.

More on Western Reaction

PM2503102793 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 24 Mar 93 First Edition pp 1, 3

[Yevgeniy Bay report: "The Fate of the Western World May Depend on the Political Skirmish in Russia"]

[Excerpts] In anticipation of the Russian Constitutional Court session Western mass media have, with a greater or lesser degree of certainty, predicted that the hotbed of confrontation in the next few days will be Mr. Zorkin's department. [passage omitted]

It is curious how the confrontation within Russia is reproduced with almost mathematical precision in the attitude to Yeltsin's statements of procommunist and anticommunist circles in the former socialist countries. As in the days of the August putsch, IZVESTIYA's correspondent Ye. Vostrukhov reports, the democratic opposition forces in Serbia have come out in support of the Russian Federation president. At the same time, Ruslan Khasbulatov has become the hero of official Belgrade television. The Russian speaker's battle against the executive has in Serbia long since won the sympathies of local patriots and the official propaganda, which accuses the Russian leadership of betraying an Orthodox country and its state's interests in the Balkans and unjustly supporting the Security Council sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The stance taken by most of our closest neighbors expresses fairly clear support for President Yeltsin's actions. A statement by Kyrgyz President A. Akayev, our correspondent A. Ryabushkin reports, says that "B. Yeltsin is one of the main guarantors of movement toward democracy and the market economy. [no closing quote as published] "In my opinion," President A. Akayev stresses, "the desire of the universally elected Russian president to allow the people to determine for themselves the choice of political system within the methods and forms of democratic development is entirely lawful."

For their part, the heads of the three Baltic states have issued a joint statement on the political crisis in Russia, expressing the hope that the first democratically elected Russian president and the Russian Government will overcome the crisis through peaceful means, our correspondent N. Lashkevich reports. [passage omitted]

Sweden Calls For 'Firm Support'

PM2503122393 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 20 Mar 93 First Edition p 3

[Report by Marat Zubko: "Carl Bildt on Russia"]

[Text] Stockholm—"The course of political and economic reforms in Russia needs firm support," Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt said, commenting on the situation in our country following the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies.

There should be no doubt, Carl Bildt went on, that President Yeltsin is the democratically legitimate representative of the policy of reforms. He was elected by the people by means of free and democratic elections. But the unclear situation since the congress of people's deputies is causing concern, the prime minister stressed.

In recent years, Carl Bildt noted, Russia has been an active and constructive force, working for cooperation and democracy in international politics. As a result it has been possible to take important steps, especially in relations between Russia and Sweden.

In conclusion, the prime minister said: "Russia's international positions are now stronger, perhaps, than ever before, as a result of the gearing of the reform policy to democracy and the market economy. So the policy that has been pursued has created good prerequisites for the implementation of Russia's long-term national interests, which can be guaranteed only through cooperation and mutual understanding with other countries."

Further on Russian-U.S. Submarine Collision

U.S. Training Blamed

PM2503123993 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 24 Mar 93 p 3

[Report by Vladimir Maryukha and Mikhail Pogorelyy: "The Pentagon Is Sorry; the Russian Navy Main Staff Is Concerned"]

[Text] According to reports from Washington, an official Pentagon spokesman has admitted that it was a U.S. submarine that collided with a Russian submarine in the Barents Sea on 20 March. Nobody was injured as a result of the incident, he stated. "The United States regrets this incident," the Pentagon spokesman stressed in the statement.

According to the Pentagon version, the U.S. submarine was performing normal operations involving "patrolling in neutral waters" approximately 100 miles from the Kola Peninsula. However, according to the Russian side's assessments, the incident took place 120 miles from our coastline, and, moreover, in a region used by ships of the Northern Fleet for combat training. This fact

is perfectly well known to naval headquarters all over the world. The Americans were not simply "patrolling" in the said region, they were collecting specific information about the activities of Russian submariners.

The U.S. Department of Defense spokesman announced that the U.S. vessel involved in the incident at the bottom of the ocean was the nuclear-powered Sturgeon-class submarine Grayling. It has been in combat service with the U.S. Navy since 1969. It is armed with cruise missiles and torpedoes. It has a displacement of about 5,000 tonnes when fully laden. The submarine has a complement of 107 sailors including 12 officers.

The Russian submarine which became the unwilling participant in the incident belongs to the Delta III class. Vessels of this type were brought into service in the Northern Fleet in the early eighties. They have a displacement of about 12,000 tonnes. Their crew numbers 130 men. They are armed with 16 ballistic missiles and torpedoes.

The Russian Navy Main Command expressed via the Navy Press Center its extreme concern about increasingly frequent instances of dangerous maneuvering by foreign submarines in Russian combat training areas. It is clear that, when organizing surveillance of the other side's military activity, it is important to avoid situations which threaten the safety of naval traffic—such incidents do not always end so fortunately, so to speak.

At the same time the Russian Navy Main Command notes the low level of responsibility for averting such incidents and the far from adequate training—contrary to what is claimed—of commanders and crews on foreign submarines engaged in surveillance of Russian warships and submarines. It seems that the level of this training, at least among U.S. submariners, has fallen to the 1967-1986 mark, when such collisions occurred every year.

Navy Expresses 'Serious Concern'

LD2503220993 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1619 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Moscow, 25 March—A Pentagon spokesman said at a briefing on the recent incident in the Barents Sea that the Russian Navy nuclear submarines (including those carrying ballistic missiles) continued to fulfill missions in the world ocean, and tracking them was an integral part of the policy that guaranteed U.S. security.

In this connection, the Navy press center made a statement that says, in particular, that "the Barents Sea is a coastal sea of Russia—a zone of its economic and other interests." Coastal waters of all states are intensively used by national navies for practicing tasks of combat training, and combat training areas are announced in the Instructions to Mariners. According to the rules of sea practice, the statement says, navigation in proving grounds is restricted, and ships that are sailing in them unplanned should observe special precautions. It is obvious that all parties should respect the existing international rules of navigation in coastal waters of sovereign states. Moreover, the U.S. control systems make it possible to track strategic targets in the Atlantic without resorting to a direct tracking of nuclear submarines.

The Main Navy Command of the Russian Federation, the statement says, "once again expresses serious concern over this incomprehensible [neponyatnoy] activity of American nuclear submarines in the Russian coastal waters and notes poor responsibility and poor professional training of their crews and their neglect of navigation safety measures."

Further on Kozyrev's U.S. Visit

Aims of Visit Assessed

PM2603103193 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 24 Mar 93 p 1

[Pavel Shinkarenko report: "President and U.S. Congress Support Boris Yeltsin, Andrey Kozyrev Is Assured in Washington"]

[Text] The head of the Russian diplomatic service, who is on a two-day visit to Washington, met with his colleague, Secretary of State Warren Christopher and was later received by U.S. President Bill Clinton.

The Russian minister's overseas trip has three aims, in our view. First and foremost, he familiarized the U.S. Administration in detail with the political situation in Russia since the Russian Federation president's 20 March address to the Russian people.

The two other tasks—relating to the clarification of the program for the Russo-U.S. summit slated for 3-4 April, and the organization of an emergency "G-7" session devoted to Russia's problems—are slightly more complicated. But I think that success is in the offing here too. In leaving their countries at a politically difficult time, both Bill Clinton and particularly Boris Yeltsin will invariably want to mark the event with concrete achievements—above all, in overcoming the difficulties with the development of reform in Russia.

Opportunities for this do exist. President Clinton, who sees democratic reform in Russia as a "problem that could determine America's economic policy and its policy in the security sphere," has an interest in a stable Russia. That is why he is conducting an offensive on several fronts. First, in the next fiscal year aid will be increased from $300 million to $700 million, and measures have been outlined to encourage private U.S. capital investment, which could be considerably in excess of the state appropriations. The second approach is to solve Russia's foreign debt problem and grant our country new IMF and World Bank loans.

Andrey Kozyrev's Washington talks may also shed some light on the situation regarding the date and venue for an emergency "G-7" session on economic reform in Russia.

The hope for mutual understanding with the Bill Clinton administration is also based on the fact that his desire to help President Boris Yeltsin is ardently backed by the Congressional leadership. This has been shown, in particular, by Senate Republican leader Robert Dole, Lee Hamilton, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and Sam Nunn, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Congressmen believe that the Russian-U.S. summit could be held in Moscow rather than Vancouver. That suggestion was made, in particular, by Senator Robert Dole. In his opinion, it would also be useful to hold the extraordinary "G-7" session in the Russian capital so as to discuss the plan for urgent aid to the Russian Government on the spot. "This would be an important kind of political support for Boris Yeltsin and the democratic reforms he is pursuing," he stated.

Relations Developing 'Successfully'

LD2503151593 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1330 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Viktor Levin commentary]

[Text] [Announcer] Russia's Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev has completed his talks in Washington and returned home. Viktor Levin, our observer, sums up the results of his talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

[Levin] The main aim of the Russian minister's visit to the American capital was to prepare the meeting between the Russian and American presidents in the Canadian town of Vancouver on 3 and 4 April. On the eve of the talks in Washington, an opinion was voiced that in view of the complex situation in Russia, the summit, the name given to the highest-level meeting, might be transferred to Moscow. This was mentioned in both capitals, and President Clinton let it be understood that he was ready for this if the issue of transferring the meeting should be raised by Russia. However, immediately on his arrival in Washington, Kozyrev said there was no reason to dramatize the situation and that Vancouver will be the venue, as agreed earlier.

Naturally, there is no need to dramatize the situation in Russia, for it is dramatic enough as it is, but it is precisely for this reason, I think, that an even-handed and thought-out decision was made not to raise the issue of transferring the venue. After all, it is perfectly clear that a wish of this kind would look like Yeltsin acknowledging the weakness of his position. This would not be to his advantage in the current situation. This is to say nothing of the fact that it is not in the nature of the president of Russia. Perhaps the fact that the venue for the Yeltsin-Clinton meeting will not be changed represents the main political and psychological result of the Russian foreign minister's talks in Washington. As for his conclusion—also made by the U.S. secretary of state—that the talks created a good basis for the summit meeting, it was, all its significance notwithstanding, not only 100 percent predictable, but also predetermined, as Russian-American relations are developing quite successfully.

Now that political storms are raging in our society, in a situation in which the sides gripped by the conflict arrive at diametrically opposite conclusions from the same facts, conclusions designed to strengthen their positions, I think that relations between Russia and America must be appraised soberly and calmly, without attempts to extract unilateral arguments from them.

Let us put the question bluntly: What does the partnership with the United States give Russia—yes, precisely Russia, rather than personally Yeltsin and Kozyrev? The Cold War was on the conscience of both sides, and its mutual renunciation yields advantages to everyone. We have been given an opportunity, immersed as we are in our internal problems, of being calm with regard to our external security. No one threatens us with an invasion, so strenuously peddled by the hysterical communist loudmouths. The United States is beginning to cut its armed expenditure in a radical way. Apart from the domestic advantages—they have more resources to tackle their internal problems, of which they also have quite a few, although of a different nature than in our country—this also facilitates an even greater strengthening of our own security: Less expenditure on the Army, a lesser threat from outside. The threat of war that once hung over all peoples has been sharply reduced. Yes, Yeltsin and Kozyrev do have a right to regard it as a gain for themselves, but it is also a gain for all Russians.

Trade Most Important Outcome

PM2503163093 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 26 Mar 93 First Edition pp 1, 3

[Mikhail Kozhukhov, Aleksandr Shalnev report: "Meeting of Russian and U.S. Presidents Will Take Place in Vancouver on Schedule"]

[Text] Washington—The fact that everyone whom the Russian foreign minister met with—President Clinton, Secretary of State Christopher, the leaders of Congress—reaffirmed their support for the process of democratic reforms in Russia and for Boris Yeltsin as democratically elected president is probably not the most important result of Andrey Kozyrev's visit to Washington.

The main thing is that very substantial positive developments emerged where they are particularly important right now—on questions of establishing a kind of economic and trade cooperation between our countries that would help Russia far more effectively than the traditional forms of aid, however massive in scale that aid may be.

On leaving the White House after his meeting with William Clinton, Kozyrev said that "the idea of aid is not popular either in the United States or in Russia." He was stating the obvious—at least as regards the States: Poll after poll shows that the majority of Americans are opposed to increasing aid to our country. And there is no certainty that even arguments like the one adduced by President Clinton, who stated at his meeting with our minister that "aid to Russia is a good capital investment for America," will be capable of radically and rapidly changing the mood of the Americans, and thus of the legislators through whose hands any bill on appropriations for assistance to foreigners will have to pass.

Russian diplomacy has decided to follow a different path. According to our information, the Kozyrev delegation went to the talks in Washington with an entirely new approach to the problem of how and in what way the United States can help us. This approach, submitted in the form of a special memorandum, is based on shifting the center of gravity to trade and to opening up and widening U.S. markets for our output, markets that are at present either closed or hedged about by all kinds of restrictions. This applies to missile technology, uranium, high-tech goods, and raw materials.

"Change the laws," we advised, "that will indicate the seriousness of your intention to help us."

It is reported from well-informed sources that our persistence produced results: For instance, a contract is to be signed in the next few days for the sale of uranium worth $115 million to America, a contract which had been held up for some months, since October of last year, by all kinds of stipulations on the American side.

At the same time an accord was reached to the effect that in a month or two another contract will be ready, for the delivery of highly enriched uranium to the United States. The contract will bring us at least $8-10 billion, which we will be able to use, in particular, as a guarantee in order to obtain credits and loans.

However, not all our ideas and plans were greeted enthusiastically in Washington. Kozyrev's proposal for Russia's phased entry—on an equal basis—into G-7 was left hanging, as was only to be expected.

On the other hand, Russia did not encounter active opposition in Washington to its idea that the Paris and London Clubs should tackle the question of deferring the extinguishing of debts or interest on those debts even before Moscow and Kiev reach agreement on sharing out the debt obligations of the former Union.

Concrete decisions on a number of these proposals can be expected to be announced at the Russian-U.S. summit meeting, which both Moscow and Washington are still preparing to hold in Vancouver and on the previously agreed dates—3 and 4 April. Clinton, Christopher, and Kozyrev all spoke out categorically on this point on Wednesday. All the indications are that the idea of transferring the summit to Moscow has died out.

Our minister's visit—the first since the Democratic administration came to power—was also marked by the fact that the two sides reached agreement on certain aspects of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. This made it possible once again to postpone the adoption by the UN Security Council of a resolution on enforcing the no-fly zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina. The postponement—the third since the question of enforcement was vigorously raised by the Americans, under President Bush—is for seven days. After seven days the resolution, whose adoption is persistently called for by virtually all the Council members, permanent and otherwise, but which Russia, as one high-ranking diplomat put it, "would like to see in a positive political context," could be adopted, but on condition that it will not come into force for a further seven days and that the implementation of the measures it stipulates will not begin for seven more days after that.

Japanese Government Invites Yeltsin To G-7 Summit

LD2603115493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1137 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Andrey Varlamov and Vladimir Solntsev]

[Text] Tokyo March 26 TASS—The Japanese Government has officially invited Russian President Boris Yeltsin to take part in the G-7 summit in Tokyo. A corresponding statement was made here during a press conference today by the Japanese Government's official representative, Secretary-General of the Japanese Cabinet of Ministers Yohei Kono.

The fact that the invitation was addressed to the Russian president in March, that is more than one month before the summit, is regarded here as an important gesture, intended to demonstrate the West's joint support to the Yeltsin Administration.

Kano also said that G-7 foreign and finance ministers would meet in Tokyo from April 14-15 to discuss aid to Russia. A representative of the Russian Government will be invited to attend it. Russia is expected to be represented at the meeting either by Vice-Chairman of the Russian Government Boris Fedorov or Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev. ITAR-TASS has learned from sources within the Japanese Foreign Ministry that this question remains so far undecided.

Japan's Watanabe Cited on Russian Aid

PM2503160293 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 93 First Edition p 7

[Report from ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA correspondents/ITAR-TASS roundup: "Pronouncement on Poor Russia"]

[Text] Japanese Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe has come out in favor of separating the question of aid to Russia from the territorial problem in relations between the two countries.

This statement was made in connection with the fact that Japan, as chairman of the conference of the G-7 leading industrially developed countries to be held in July, is coming under serious pressure from its partners, who are demanding that it make more active efforts to grant aid to the Yeltsin administration, which is in a difficult position.

Yeltsin Reshuffles Team for Black Sea Fleet Talks

LD2603120993 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1130 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow, 26 Mar—Russian President Boris Yeltsin has signed a decree on "changes to the Russian Federation state delegation for talks with Ukraine about the Black Sea Fleet." Andrey Astakhov, deputy finance minister of the Russian Federation; Feliks Gromov, commander in chief of the Russian Federation Navy; and Anatoliy Yunkin, head of a department of the Russian Federation Ministry of Security, have been added to the delegation. The same decree removes V.V. Barchuk, P.F. Dubrovin,and A.A. Kokoshin from the delegation.

Slovak Premier Meciar Meets Yeltsin in Moscow

Treaty Prospects Viewed

LD2503170693 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 1600 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Excerpt] This afternoon Russian President Boris Yeltsin received Slovak Premier Vladimir Meciar. They discussed topical political problems focusing first and foremost on prospects for the further deepening of mutual trade and economic relations, and they examined possibilities of concluding a Russian-Slovak treaty on neighborly relations and friendly cooperation. [passage omitted]

Further on Yeltsin Talks

LD2503151293 Prague CTK in English 1244 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March (CTK correspondent)—Russian President Boris Yeltsin has received in Moscow Vladimir Meciar, currently on a two-day official visit to Russia.

Yeltsin congratulated Meciar on the creation of independent Slovakia as of January 1, 1993, and stressed that Russia and Slovakia are two new independent states.

The meeting still continues behind closed doors. It is attended by Russian Vice-Premier Aleksandr Shokhin and the two countries' Foreign Minister, Andrey Kozyrev and Jozef Moravcik.

Speaking at a press conference after the meeting, Meciar said the Russian president had accepted an invitation to visit Slovakia where a Slovak-Russian inter-state agreement would be signed.

The invitation was conveyed to Yeltsin by Meciar on behalf of the Slovak President, Michal Kovac.

Meciar was the first foreign head of government to meet with Yeltsin since the Russian president's Saturday [20 March] television address in which Yeltsin announced the imposition of limited presidential rule, which he was later forced to retract under opposition pressure on Wednesday.

The Slovak premier told a news conference Yeltsin was moderately optimistic, given his current battle with the Russian Parliament amid the current constitutional crisis in Russia. I understand that his position is a difficult one. He has sacrificed himself for democracy, he added.

Meciar said he highly valued today's meeting with Yeltsin, and added that the fact that the Russian president had made time for it in the midst of a very difficult period, signalled the importance Yeltsin ascribed to Slovakia.

Meciar characterised the talks as open, useful, and mutually advantageous. The two men discussed a prepared inter-state agreement between Russia and Slovakia. According to the Slovak premier, Yeltsin gave high marks to today's meetings between Russian Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin and the Slovak delegation, about which he had been well briefed.

Meciar said he conveyed to the Russian president and premier that Slovakia had faith in the success of Russian reforms and in the country's peaceful development.

Bilateral Agreement Signed

OW2503145593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1417 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia and Slovakia have many a common interest to share, and both countries will benefit by pursuing them, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said at a press conference in Moscow on Thursday [25 March] after he and Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar signed an agreement on the two countries' economic and technical cooperation which crowned their talks. Viktor Chernomyrdin said that the parties at the talks addressed many issues, including those related to the fuel and energy complex. "This is one of our most dependable branches, where everything is working smoothly," the Russian prime minister emphasized.

Vladimir Meciar, on his part, said the countries are now developing new mechanisms of cooperation between them. The Slovak prime minister attributed this to Slovak production capabilities "which are idle now because they were essentially oriented at implementing the orders of the former Soviet Union." He characterized the talks which had just been held as "a beginning of a new way in the friendship between our two countries."

A Russian MFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] official in charge of Russia's relations with Slovakia told Interfax that in the near future the countries are expected to sign another bilateral agreement to preclude dual taxation.

Slovak Foreign Minister Jozef Moravcik, who is also in Moscow as part of the Slovak delegation, will have talks with his Russian counterpart Andrey Kozyrev (the talks being due to start at 4:45 P.M. [1345 GMT]).

At 8 P.M. Thursday night, the Slovak delegation will leave Moscow from Vnukovo airport.

Further on Agreement

LD2503162693 Prague CTK in English 1604 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 25 (CTK correspondent)—The premiers of Russia and Slovakia, Viktor Chernomyrdin and Vladimir Meciar, signed an agreement on economic and scientific-technological cooperation between Russia and Slovakia here today.

Meciar, currently on a two-day visit to Russia, met with Chernomyrdin for a two-hour tete-a-tete meeting, after which short talks of the two delegations followed.

Meciar's delegation includes Foreign Minister Jozef Moravcik, Economics Minister Jaroslav Kubecka and Finance Minister Julius Toth. Russia was represented among others by Deputy Premier Aleksandr Shokhin.

The two premiers agreed to consider the possibility of creating a free-trade zone between Russia and Slovakia, which, according to Meciar, might be considered in relation to cooperation within the Visegrad group (comprising the Czech and Slovak Republics, Poland and Hungary).

Chernomyrdin characterised his meeting with Meciar as a good debate, and assured the Slovak counterpart that Russia needs Slovakia's production.

Meciar said Slovakia was striving to build on everything that was useful in the past. He said Slovakia and Russia have similar problems, although they are more complicated on the part of Russia. He called the Slovak-Russian talks very sincere.

Meciar 'Confident' Crisis Will Pass

OW2503201393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1942 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The fact that President Boris Yeltsin finds it possible to meet with Slovak Prime Minister at a time as trying as this signals the importance he is attaching to the development of relations between Moscow and Bratislava. Vladimir Meciar made this statement at a press conference in Moscow on Thursday [25 March].

In the his words, the Russian president who "has sacrificed himself in a struggle for democracy" was "moderately optimistic" during their meeting on Thursday.

The Slovak premier said he is confident that the crisis in Russia will pass. He reminded in this regard that it has taken Slovakia almost a year to overcome a crisis similar to that experienced by Russia. "Power methods won't settle the problem, but they will further aggravate the causes which engendered it," he said.

Vladimir Meciar observed that Slovakia, as much as the other European countries, is interested in the success of the Russian reform and preservation of law and order in Russia. "Just try to imagine what would happen if Russia cut its oil and gas supplies to Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Germany and other countries, moreover if Russian nuclear weapons were captured by uncontrollable groups," he said.

Touching on the problem of Russia's debt to former Czechoslovakia, he indicated that one of the first steps in resolving it would be a distribution of the debt between the Czech Republic and Slovakia. "After that, we will be able to reach an agreement with Moscow in this regard, and it won't take too much time either," he said.

The premier noted, however, that Bratislava finds unacceptable the so-called "Hungarian option" when Russia repaid some of its debt to Budapest in arms supplies, saying Slovakia produces a lot of arms of its own.

Rejects Joint Debt Solution With Czechs

LD2503212393 Prague CTK in English 2024 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 25 (CTK)—Slovakia will not solve the problem of the Russian debt toward the former Czechoslovakia jointly with the Czech Republic due to its poor experience with the Czechs, Slovak Premier Vladimir Meciar said today.

Addressing a press conference at the close of his two-day visit to Russia, Meciar said that settling the issue is a bilateral affair of Russia and Slovakia.

He said the Slovak Government wanted a realistic division of the debt into a Czech and Slovak part. We are able to agree with Russia in a relatively short time, Meciar said, adding that the debt need not necessarily be settled by payment. An agreement is possible as soon as the debt is divided between the two republics (successor states to the former Czechoslovak Federation), Meciar said.

Russia's debt toward the former Czechoslovakia is estimated at about five billion USD.

Earlier in the day, Slovak Foreign Minister Jozef Moravcik, member of Meciar's entourage, met with his Russian counterpart Andrey Kozyrev for talks on economic relations. Attention was also paid to the share of Russia and Slovakia in improving the mechanism of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

Russia and Slovakia maintain the closest historical and cultural bonds. We are seeking to give them a new impulse in the present conditions, Kozyrev told journalists after the meeting.

Moravcik and Kozyrev signed a protocol on cooperation between the two ministries in 1993 and 1994.

In the evening, Meciar ended his two-day official visit and left Moscow for Bratislava.

Talks With Yeltsin 'Very Useful'

LD2503222893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2132 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow March 26 TASS—"Talks with the Russian President Boris Yeltsin were open and very useful for both sides," Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar said at a news conference in Moscow on Thursday [25 March].

Meciar said that during the meeting an issue of signing a Russo-Slovak interstate agreement and a wide range of problems of bilateral cooperation were discussed.

Meciar told journalists that the Russian president had accepted an invitation to pay an official visit to Slovakia.

Asked by ITAR-TASS about the development of economic cooperation between Russia and Slovakia, Meciar said that after the disintegration of the former Soviet Union and the division of Czechoslovakia the two countries retained their economic, trade and financial ties, which can be restored and successfully developed.

At the same time, it is not enough to improve old mechanisms of intercontact and it is necessary to develop new ones, Meciar said. He pointed out that talks were underway on signing a Russia-Slovak interstate agreement on cooperation and that prospects for mutually advantageous cooperation in different spheres were being discussed.

Meciar said that "despite mistakes and blunders of the past we would like to go ahead and find ways for mutual cooperation."

The Slovak prime minister expressed his regret that in 1991, a plan for the establishment of the Russo-Slovak bank was not realised, which damaged the interests of both sides. Meciar said that talks were under way between the two countries on the establishment of two banks, and that consultations were going ahead for the establishment of the Russo-Slovak bank.

Commenting on the political situation in Russia, Meciar said that if the situation develops in the direction of the conflict, it will pose a threat to the whole world. "The conflict cannot be a means of resolving problems, it can only worsen them," he said.

Troops Maintaining 'Strictest Neutrality' in Abkhazia

LD2503165193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1505 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Ostanin]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar—The training of military servicemen to take part in combat operations in Abkhazia and other "hot spots" has never been and is not being carried out in any of the units of the Group of Russian troops in Transcaucasia, including the 405th motor rifle regiment. Russian troops are observing the strictest neutrality and a principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of the Georgian Republic. This statement was made today by the Military Council of the Group of Russian troops in Transcaucasia, an ITAR-TASS correspondent was told at the news center of the Russian Ministry Defense.

Some of the media, the statement says, have carried a report about a news conference of two Russian military servicemen—Sergey Golyshov and Vladimir Pyatugin—which took place in Tbilisi, at which they stated that they were fraudulently sent to serve in Georgia and asked to undergo special training in a reconnaissance battalion of the 405th motor-rifle regiment to take part in combat operations in Abkhazia against Georgians for financial reward.

These servicemen, the statement notes, served in the unit for only 10 days and left it voluntarily on 21 March. Criminal proceedings have been instituted against them in this regard. According to existing information, they are being detained in one of the troop units of the Republic of Georgia. The Georgian side, despite several protests from the command of the group of troops, continues to detain them, which is making the process of an objective inquiry difficult. The Military Council has demanded that the Russian servicemen Golyshov and Pyatugin be handed over to the military procurator's office.

Fighters Patrol Georgian Airspace

LD2503181193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1640 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vadim Byrkin]

[Text] Moscow, 25 March—Russian units in the territory of the republic of Georgia have not been shelled or

attacked in the last 24 hours. Russian Air Force fighters were on patrol in the air, but did not use their guns, ITAR-TASS was informed today at the Russian Defense Ministry press center.

FRY Leader Appeals to War Veterans in Moscow

LD2503215093 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2100 GMT 25 Mar 93

["Pool" item]

[Text] Moscow, March 25 (TANJUG)—President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Dobrica Cosic has appealed to the participants of an international gathering of World-War-II veterans to speak up against the injustice being done to the Serbian and Montenegrin peoples and to side with freedom, truth and justice, as they did in the anti-fascist war.

The gathering is being held in Volgograd to mark the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Stalingrad.

In his message to the participants, President Cosic said that [words indistinct] ethnic and religious war in territories of the former Yugoslavia was provoked by the nationalist and secessionist forces with the help of the states aspiring to a new hegemony over Yugoslavia and the Balkan region, as well as over Europe and the world.

In 1991, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia unilaterally seceded from the former six-member Yugoslav Federation, altering by force its internationally recognized borders.

Under strong pressure from Germany, the international community recognized the independence of Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1992, while ignoring the will of the Serbian people in the two republics, Serbia and Montenegro, which decided by plebiscite to remain in Yugoslavia.

The Serbian people subsequently proclaimed its own republics in two former Yugoslav territories where it is in majority—the Republic of Serb Krajina and the Serb Republic (in Bosnia-Herzegovina).

In his message Cosic warned that the current war in Bosnia-Herzegovina may be internationalized, "with tragic consequences for all peoples in the Balkans, and not here alone."

"I appeal to you to voice your demand before the United Nations and the European Community for the establishment of a just peace on the Yugoslav soil, peace based on the democratic human rights and the rights of the peoples," said Cosic in his message to the war veterans.

The Yugoslav president noted that the international community has unjustly placed the people of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia "into a real concentration camp of our world."

The U.N. Security Council last May imposed comprehensive, severe sanctions on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, i.e., its republics of Serbia and Montenegro, because of their alleged involvement in the civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina between Bosnian Moslems, Serbs and Croats.

Cosic urged the participants of the Volgograd meeting to appeal to the world to "free the peoples of Serbia and Montenegro from the cruel and inhuman sanctions which have caused misery to millions of people and nation-wide despair of a people which was, by its sacrifices and heroism, in the foremost ranks of the anti-fascist front of the Second World War in the struggle against fascism."

Ninth Congress of People's Deputies

Khasbulatov Discusses Crisis, Yeltsin, Congress

LD2503192993 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1730 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Interview with Ruslan Imranovich Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, by Yevgeniy Tolstykh in Moscow; date not given—live or recorded]

[Text] [Tolstykh] Probably for over a year now Russia has been living in some kind of a strange state. Hopes that appear are displaced by disappointment; the disappointment is displaced by alarm, which at times even turns to fear. Then hope appears again, and all this is repeated.

On 20 March, when the president's address was delivered, well, it was probably received not unequivocally, and these qualities, these states were probably experienced by all our people—some experienced hope, others disappointment, others alarm. Everyone perceived it differently depending on what was important to them, what they expected, and what they hoped. How did you perceive it, Ruslan Imranovich?

[Khasbulatov] The first feeling, frankly, was a feeling of shame. You have rightly said in your introduction that we have been in a fever for several years now. Hopes turn literally not only into alarm, but sometimes even literally into desperation. Will we be able finally to overcome this kind of simply mad motion along some kind of a giant spiral, a vortex dragging us down into a deep precipice?

Of course it was obvious from the text of this address that it takes our esteemed president a long way outside the boundaries of the constitutional field. Our president, after all, is a constitutional president. And there is no place outside the constitution for either the president or any official figure of our state.

Of course the day after we had to interrupt our visit, cut short a meeting at the Kazakhstan Supreme Soviet, a meeting with the president of Kazakhstan, and fly to Moscow. That was on Sunday. A session of the Russian Supreme Soviet had already been called at which we discussed the situation, made the appropriate request, the submission to the Constitutional Court. Finally, the findings of the Constitutional Court arrived, and we are calling the Congress of People's Deputies to resolve the issue of this most complex political crisis.

[Tolstykh] These aspects are fairly serious and perhaps we should talk about them separately, about the findings of the Constitutional Court and about the forthcoming congress. But now I would like to come back to the decree. Here, I have brought it along. Well, thank God it has been published and our citizens, all in all, have an opportunity to learn the president's intentions in detail, the legally formulated intentions: Reduction of unemployment by creating new jobs by implementing federal and local programs; the fight against crime. And there is still, as it were, a mass of such long-awaited, positive decisions. So what is it that gives rise—let's put it this way—to varying assessments of the decree? Or is there something else behind it? Is there something between the lines—something that cannot be seen by the ordinary citizen who is not, let's say, burdened with a knowledge of the subtleties of politics?

[Khasbulatov] Well, you see, the fact is that the president's address did not happen either immediately or suddenly. You remember how there was a build-up of tension and, literally, hysteria from the presidential side? His press secretary spoke repeatedly in various forums saying: The president will be presenting a drastic proposal any time now. And then, the day after next, again the president will be speaking any time now, the president will speak. He is dissatisfied with the congress's decisions. He will propose radical measures, and so on. And, of course, this public and even worldwide excitement was clearly and vividly illustrated. So that, of course, it is, after all, natural that every normal person regards that expected speech by the president, his address, as an independent action having no concrete connection with that concrete decree.

This address was a concrete action, which immediately put him right outside the bounds of the constitution. That is what this is about. All the more so since he said in the speech that I have signed the decree, I have done it, and so on. The president affirmed that he had signed it and done it. So his decrees are above the constitution, his decrees cannot be protested by anybody and cannot be suspended by anybody. Quite the reverse: Practically any activity by constitutional bodies of power can be suspended by his decrees. That is what this is about. Of course, this frightened society and people and naturally forced deputies to remember their constitutional duty.

Let's now return to the decree that has just appeared. But let's not try to be too smart about this. This isn't child's stuff. It's not that decree, of course, that one's been hidden away or scrapped altogether after....

[Tolstykh] [passage indistinct, both talking at once]

[Khasbulatov] That's right, the one the president was talking about. It was obviously signed, but after seeing how sharp the reaction was and how determined legislators were to uphold constitutional rights, and, quite simply, the determination of the regions and the constituent parts of the Russian Federation—we are a federal state—as they rose to defend their constitutional rights, then, of course, the president's side was forced to change tack, and within a few days...

[Tolstykh, interrupting] Within four days.

[Khasbulatov] That's right. Four days later we saw a different decree, also with breaches of the constitution, by the way, but not as dramatic as the ones in the president's address. It was done in a hurry. Four days was plenty to do it properly. They couldn't even get the numbering right...

[Tolstykh, interrupting] The decree's number?

[Khasbulatov, laughing] Yes. The preceding decree's number doesn't fit in with this one's number...

[Tolstykh, interrupting] And the next one?

[Khasbulatov] Or the following one, and so forth. So, this decree that's appeared can still be adopted somehow, and indeed we would have supported most of its clauses. But, excuse me, surely the legislators can't be against fighting crime? We've given the government the broadest of powers to do just that. We examined this at the congress. Go ahead, get on with it. Who's against?

The fight against inflation: I'm sorry, but as a matter of fact our respected Gaydar government has foisted this hyperinflation on us. Weren't we against this inflation? On the contrary, at the congress we intend to resolve yet one more social issue: on compensating the population's investments. This is a very painful problem, because one fine day the majority of our population turned out to be destitute. We are making very great efforts together with the government to resolve the issues of compensation for the investments made by the population.

[Tolstykh] It has turned out that we continue to be destitute today in this respect...

[Khasbulatov, interrupting] We continue to remain destitute. Therefore, we would like...[changes thought] And at the Seventh Congress—incidentally, this was a good decision—we strengthened the government's importance and gave the government the opportunity to be the initiator of legislative proposals. But, clearly, we need to extend its independence even more. Clearly, we must create conditions where representatives of broad professional groups from subjects of the Russian Federation and various political forces reflecting various opinions come into the government, so that we have a government of national consensus, of national trust, so that real professionals are in it and not ideologists who are never off our television screens.

[Tolstykh] First, there was one lot of ideologists, then another.

[Khasbulatov] Yes, there was one lot of ideologists, and now we have other ideologists, and we are tired of all these ideologists.

[Tolstykh] Ideology doesn't make life any better.

[Khasbulatov] Honestly, this is absolute madness. All these ministers and deputy prime ministers going about their business. It's a huge country, but no, he has to show off in front of the television screen and criticize the legislators. [chuckles]

And who is stopping him? At one time, the union center stopped him, then they pulled down this union center, they brought down the party, and then the union was brought down. And now who is stopping them? Now it's the legislators that are stopping them. But if we bring down the legislators, it's as though you will be stopping a population of 150 million to implement these reforms. Of course, all these reforms have turned out to be extremely unsuccessful. They have led to destitution.

But we should not now be looking for the guilty parties in the wrong places. Look, surely our people are not against reforms? I do not consider, I cannot see any serious force that would make antireformist pronouncements either in parliament, in the congress, or in the regions. There are no very serious obstructive forces.

What is it that we're missing? I think that a very important basis that really should become established is the democratic development of our society. I greatly fear a retreat from democracy. I have already said that there are examples in practice of monopolization of power staring us in the face. I mean a powerful attack on democratic transformations, under the guise of a fight against supposed antireformers. This is a very dangerous trend. We should not allow power to be concentrated in the hands of the executive alone. I think that the main task in society is to fight for democracy, and the key factor in this fight for democracy is loyalty to the Constitution and maintaining constitutional principles. It is no accident that various movements are being created in the regions, committees in support of the Constitution are being set up, committees in support of democracy. This is already becoming a mass movement. Why? Because people fear a new spiral of dictatorship, new oppression, and so forth.

Does the president not need committees of this sort? I believe that all authorities need committees of this sort, committees for defending the constitution. That is without any personality aspects.

[Tolstykh] Without descending into personalities.

[Khasbulatov] Of course, there's no need to descend into personalities. If it's not this president, it will be another president; if it's not this head of parliament, it will be another head of parliament; if it's not this parliament, it will be another parliament. The important thing is to preserve parliament. It is important to preserve the state's democratic institutions and not try to eliminate them as democratic institutions. This is what is necessary and not specific personalities. Unfortunately, we have not had too many specific personalities in our history—I mean at the summit of the political Olympus—who acted in some way for the good of all people, etc. Therefore, the preservation of the democratic beginnings that we have achieved is the chief task of our society and our population. I would like to draw serious attention to the fact that it is democracy that is under threat just now. This is the essence of matters. Of course, it is necessary to very seriously develop a program connected to a complete social reorientation in our economic policy. This shock therapy, of course, arouses uncertainty in the future, an alienation of people from power. People have begun to fear power—the power of

the president, the power of the parliament, any power—no one believes in anyone any more.

That is why it was no coincidence that I have supported and put forward the idea of...[changes thought] Let's do it. Elections are the best form of referendum. Let's agree on a date for electing a new president and a date for electing new deputies and let the people express their views. I will be the first at the ballot box if our people are asked clear questions:

—Do you want the shock therapy to continue?

—Are you happy with your social situation?

—Do you want the president's economic policy to continue?

Are these questions clear?

[Tolstykh] Yes, they are clear to everyone.

[Khasbulatov] Or another question: Do you want a simultaneous election of the president and the deputies, not later than, let's say, spring 1994, or autumn 1993. Is that a specific question?

[Tolstykh] Yes, it is concrete.

[Khasbulatov] That is why I say: Let us not deceive the people with all sorts of clever tricks. Right. When I say, listen, that is not a specific question, I am being labelled as allegedly denying the people the right to express their view.

[Tolstykh] Originally, the following thesis was propagandized: There is a conflict between the two branches of power—the executive and legislative. Then a different version appeared. It was expressed by Boris Nikolayevich in his address: There is no such conflict; there is another conflict between the people and a pro-communist, Bolshevik lobby in the parliament. But yet another idea, version, option is being introduced into public opinion, as far as I know, as far as I was told. That is: No, comrades, there is a conflict between Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin and Ruslan Imranovich Khasbulatov.

[Khasbulatov] It is very unpleasant. Moreover, I am always personified by...[changes tack] It seems to me that dirty propaganda is under way at present—a non-Russian in origin and so on and so forth. I must say frankly—and I have said this frankly—that I have always believed that a perfectly precise pro-Russian policy must be conducted so that a correct policy can be implemented in our multinational society. I am conducting such a pro-Russian policy, but I don't know how successful I am. Why, you may suddenly say? Not because I am a pro-Russian chauvinist, but because Russians are the biggest section of our population. And if Russian people, the Russian nation, feel free and protected in their own land, then this is the best guarantee for all the other less numerous peoples, so that they feel just as protected. This is the best guarantee of calm in our multinational land. The Russians have to feel that they are protected, first and foremost.

So, since becoming first deputy to Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin [when Yeltsin was chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet], I have been making my position absolutely clear regarding this toughest of of issues, the nationality issue.

[Tolstykh] From time immemorial.

[Khasbulatov] That's right, it's been difficult since time immemorial. And you know, I enjoy in this the support of the republics, krays, and oblasts, because there are intelligent people there and they fully understand this thought, this central idea. To return to the substance of your question, what kind of personal conflicts could I have? I know, and world history recently shows, that there was a fairly serious personality clash between Yeltsin and Gorbachev. I didn't have anything like that, nor could I, of course. I don't have any personal conflicts at all. But let me remind you of when I spoke out against this shock therapy, the economic policy that Burbulis and Gaydar were pursuing, this was at the end of January 1992. I spoke out as a professional economist who's been studying market economies for a quarter of a century—I used to be head of an international economics faculty; I well know what a market economy is, I know the market-economy countries, the practice, companies, and their lines of businesses. So of course I spoke out right away. Of course, not publicly at first, as you know, but through talks with Gaydar, the president, ministers. I asked them: What are you doing?

We are, after all, running our industry in such a way that we are simply destroying it. We are leading our people into poverty. Social clashes and conflicts are beginning. As a result, it will be necessary to change the orientation. We shouldn't allow this. Let's rather do it right: competently. There was a liberalization of prices straight away. What do you think, that goods will appear here? No, no, they said, no.

Boris Nikolayevich said that prices will not be increased by more than three-fold, at most three and a half fold—the famous phrase. I said: not three and a half fold, but 100-fold. Because shortages will grow, production will fall, demand will grow, and prices will naturally creep upwards. I said: How will you restrain all this? You know this picture is in accordance with arithmetic.

Excuse me, but how could the head of parliament in these instances fail to take a position? So, on the eve of the sixth congress, at that time we and the Supreme Soviet leadership—when I was supported in this position by both Shumeyko, the present deputy prime minister, and Sergey Aleksandrovich Filatov—together we all made a report at the Supreme Soviet in which we proposed a sensible approach. Unfortunately our proposals at the sixth congress were sunk; they weren't adopted. Once again the go-ahead was given, under pressure from the president, to the Gaydar government: Go on, continue.

Furthermore, it's true, hope was strong in the deputies, who said, well, that's what they are saying, you can understand the arguments. I'm not going to harshly accuse the deputies or the population. They said: We have only just begun the reforms. Now it is only March and you want to overturn them. Give us a little time, six months, and by the end of the year we will do everything, by the end of the year it will be okay. That's how they spoke. Well, you saw the end of the year. There have never been so many failures, even during the war.

[Tolstykh] Perhaps somebody said okay, but not here.

[Khasbulatov] What can I say? Unfortunately, foreign policy is fully subordinated to Western influence. There is no secret about that. People are very much concerned that our prestige in world affairs, our political and economic influence, our political and economic power are plummeting. The notion of a great power is not solely imperialist. A great power means a state confident of itself, capable of protecting its individuals, its citizens. The blue berets will come to establish order here as in Yugoslavia before you know it. Do we want this?

We need to have an effective parliament, in fact, which should control the government, an effective executive power. We are all interested in an effective and strong government power, but we are all interested in that government being under parliament's control.

We have a tragic history. We know what that means: an executive power which is not under the control of people's elects. I agree with many voters who are fed up with deputies. Well, they have the right to elect different deputies. So the people, the citizens, should not be deprived of the right to elect new deputies for themselves. At present it is not only individual deputies, the speaker, or the Constitutional Court that are under attack; it is the institution of parliamentarianism and democratic foundations that have come under attack. Do our people realize this at least? I would like to ask you to think about this.

Of course, take the latest facts. Somebody promises to give the Cossacks a Cossack republic for their support. Now Ataman Kaledin [reference to Cossack leader who led anti-Soviet rebellion in 1918] is going to march on Moscow against the congress.

[Tolstykh] The latest events in Rostov-on-Don....

[Khasbulatov, interrupting] That's what I'm telling you. If a decree like that ever appears, it will mean the beginning of the disintegration of the Russian Federation. We'll lose the northern Caucasus, and some kind of disintegration process will start there as well. For this reason....[changes thought] It is not order when, as it is happening now, squads and special officials are brought in to fight the congress. Squads of miners are being brought to Moscow. Imagine.

[Tolstykh] That has already happened?

[Khasbulatov] Unfortunately it has. This is what those officials are up to. Is this democracy? Are these people defending democracy? What are they defending? Only their own power, evidently. That means they are afraid of something. I don't know what.

I'd like to say that we haven't convened congress to have someone sacked or take revenge or whatever. We have a particular ruling by the Constitutional Court. There is plenty the congress might do. When I was meeting with the president yesterday—I'm being honest with you—I tried to persuade him: Come on, admit the mistakes in your address, it was over the top, it was unconstitutional, you've got to tone it down somehow, own up to some errors, and so on. Let's find some kind of intelligent way out of this situation together.

[Tolstykh] Some kind of formula for agreement?

[Khasbulatov] Yes, some kind of formula for agreement.

[Tolstykh] Do you think that congress will be able tomorrow to find or work out such a formula for agreement?

[Khasbulatov] It will be difficult. The congress will be very difficult. However, I hope that the president has the desire and aspiration to cooperate. If the president understands that he was nudged into erroneous decisions...[changes thought] Well, it happens. What can you do? There are probably such situations—and so if the president works and cooperates with the congress constructively, then I think ways out can be found.

But very many people are asking the question today: Look, how is it that our esteemed Boris Nikolayevich cannot get on with anyone? He did not get on very well with Gorbachev, the Union Congress was disbanded, the Union parliament was disbanded; then they spoke about a CIS—but the CIS is not working; now the Russian parliament seems to be in the way, now the Russian speaker is in the way—and what next? Who comes next? Some people express this opinion, and quite seriously too. And there is a demand [addressed to Yeltsin]: You know what? You must act strictly in accordance with laws and so on. There has been a demand simply to abolish the institute of the Presidency, and the reason they give for this is that ours is a federative, multinational country, with many republics, oblasts, and krays, and so is there a need for a supreme official like a president in the governing structure? Perhaps a better form would be classic parliamentarianism, with a really efficient and strong government, a two-chamber parliament—they could do their job and what would they need a president for? But my opinion is that it is dangerous to destroy an existing institute.

[Tolstykh] We all understand that now, in expectation of tomorrow, probably everyone is living in the same state, all in all, a state of alarm.

[Khasbulatov] Alarm.

[Tolstykh] It's an open secret, Ruslan Imranovich. But what can replace this state? What other feeling? What do you think?

[Khasbulatov] It can change. You know, I keep saying one thing and say it openly. If the president speaks to the Congress and says: Indeed, I was wrong, let's resolve things together, let's form a government together and leave it alone, I am not going to interfere in its business, then right, we shall give it the ..idest possible powers. Right, that's one. Let's immediately give up economic undertakings that have not been thought through, indeed stabilize the price factor in many areas, for instance food, the things that are needed most, for instance baby foods, clothing, and so on.

[Tolstykh] Can tomorrow's congress replace with hope the alarm that currently fills our people?

[Khasbulatov] We will try. I, at any rate, will try in any way that I can, but you know that the chairman of the Supreme Soviet is not omnipotent in such a complex affair. It would another matter if the president were to make a serious attempt to help overcome this crisis and not deepen it. I think in that case we would be able to reach some kind of serious agreement as a result of which people would be given new hope.

Shumeyko Interviewed on Aim of Congress Session

PM2503192593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 26 Mar 93 p 2

[Interview with First Vice Premier Vladmir Filippovich Shumeyko by Vasiliy Kononenko; place and not given: "V. Shumeyko: We Will Go to the Congress With One Aim—To Ensure Deputies Retain Their Common Sense"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] When the "meeting of the four" failed to produce reassuring results, the presidential team headquartered in S. Filatov's office held protracted consultations and conferences. Vice President A. Rutskoy was not there; he had withdrawn from the preparations for the Congress to the clear satisfaction of some of the participants in these conferences, who regard his behavior as treachery. First Vice Premier V. Shumeyko also took part in the brainstorming session. Your IZVESTIYA correspondent succeeded in talking to him late on the evening of 24 March. The conversation began with a very sober thought: What can be used to counter the crazy idea of impeachment, which leaves no room for compromise?

[Shumeyko] I very much hope that the deputies will have enough sense not to cross the critical line—which is what impeachment is. Beyond it lies a real abyss, a split in society with the prospect of a terrible tragedy. This situation is possible not only if two-thirds of the deputies vote in favor of the president's resignation at the Congress. We have already heard the following suggestion at the session: There is, it is being said, Article 121/6, which envisions the president's immediate dismissal in the event of his adopting a decision to terminate the activity of constitutional organs of power. We know that the president has not perpetrated such actions, but the most unexpected interpretations of his actions are possible at the Congress. All that will be required is a simple majority vote. I hope once again that those who hold the mandates will remember the possible result of such a vote, whatever majority it gets.

Let us imagine for a moment that impeachment goes ahead, and the majority vote in favor of the president's resignation, but it was the people who elected the president, not the deputies, who, on the basis of the Constitutional Court's false decision, have decided to set themselves above the people. Correspondingly, we no longer have a Constitutional Court; it has slid into political intrigue and is no longer entitled to pass judgement. Its hasty decision, adopted amid a whole series of flagrant breaches of the law on this court, now sheds light on a great deal, particularly the fact that a general scenario for removing the president from power is being put into effect. Nevertheless, this court and this Congress can pass any verdicts, but the president must not and will not react to them. Then, Russia would break up. One can already predict today that most Russian citizens will side with him. The miners and the Cossacks will rise up... All you need is one local outbreak, or clash, and there will be a chain reaction throughout Russia, with a terrible price to pay.

[Kononenko] Recent days have seen the publication of many reports from various regions where the signs of such a split—a split into supporters of the president and supporters of the Supreme Soviet—are to be seen. What information do you have on this score?

[Shumeyko] The president has strong support at the local level, including support in the shape of the heads of the republics, who are increasingly aware that Russia won't exist without a strong president; and here all disagreements should end. The anarchy of the parliamentary opposition, which is losing touch with reality, has sobered many people up: At the Sunday rally, with the opposition's help, matters reached the point where the state flag above the White House was pulled down. The time has come for every Russian to make make up his mind: With whom does he side? Fortunately, deputies from the local level, burdened with everyday management concerns and a sense of responsibility, assess the situation more level-headedly than their Moscow-based colleagues. Conversations with deputies at the local level indicate that the idea of impeachment was solely the product of the White House.

[Kononenko] On whose initiative did the four-sided meeting take place, and why was it needed?

[Shumeyko] The meeting was held on Chernomyrdin's initiative. After the president's appeal to the people and the hasty decisions by the Constitutional Court and parliament that followed it, the prime minister proposed

such a meeting to obviate the need to convene a congress, which could have unpredictable consequences, particularly as the economy simply won't survive further political instability. I did not attend the meeting. I only know that in response to the prime minister's attempts to find a compromise—and he firmly sided with the president—the other side, in the shape of Khasbulatov and Zorkin, demanded that the president withdraw his appeal and protect the Constitutional Court from attacks. You will agree that such a demand is absurd: The president has spoken on television, and now, it seems, he has to tell the people: Forget everything I said last Saturday. In exchange, he was promised that there would be no impeachment at the Congress.

[Kononenko] Do you not think that there are elements of political bluff in this scenario?

[Shumeyko] I do not rule that out. Ruslan Imranovich is probably seeking to tame certain forces among the deputies, thus enhancing his own standing. But he should understand that the conservative forces which seek to overthrow the president will immediately remove him, too, once they have achieved their goal. They need him today only as a kind of battering ram. That is why the speaker performs a balancing act between the majority and the minority at the congresses, taking turns making a move toward the opposition and then the president.

[Kononenko] How will you, the president's team, conduct yourselves at the Congress? Are there any "tricks up your sleeve" to meet the Congress' anticipated tough measures?

[Shumeyko] Yes, we have a trick: We have been invited to the Congress, and we will go there with but one aim—to ensure that common sense does not desert the deputies.

[Kononenko] Is there a firm decision to proceed with the plebiscite?

[Shumeyko] There is no other way today.

Filatov on Possible Outcome of Congress

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[Text] Moscow March 26 TASS—"The Congress will be that of confrontation. It should not have been convened," head of the president's staff Sergey Filatov said in an interview with TRUD published today. At the same time, he believes that it would be acceptable for Russia to give the president an opportunity at the Congress to put some problems to the vote, including those dealing with the constitution. "I think we should do what the subjects of the federation are suggesting. The possibility of the Congress to bring up and discuss problems should be restricted: Global problems dealing with the country's development should not be resolved without special examination, as though we are at a political meeting. It these two issues are approved at the Congress, it would be a good result, I think," he said.

"Various forces are preparing various scenarios of the Congress, including pre-term parliamentary and presidential elections and the impeachment of the president. "However, no impeachment, no limitation, no humiliation today will help resolve the problems facing Russia. Moreover, Yeltsin is backed by certain groups of the population which will take to the streets tomorrow, and we shall have nothing to stop and calm them down. This is why we should realise that 'simple' decisions taken at this Congress may turn out to be tragic for the country. We may have a civil war on our hands, if we lose self-control. One should understand it clearly," he stressed.

In his opinion, "different attitudes to the economic reform is the key problem around which the political dispute is going on."

Deputy Says 80 Deputies To Decide Yeltsin's Fate

LD2603081393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0804 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow March 26 TASS—If it comes to the impeachment voting, the fate of President Yeltsin will be decided by 80 people's deputies who failed to make up their minds at the previous congress, member of the president [as received] of the Russian parliament Vladimir Podoprigora believes. "The rest of people's deputies have already made up their minds," he told ITAR-TASS today at the Grand Kremlin Palace.

He believes that if the vote is in favour of the president, the leadership of the parliament may amend the articles of the constitution, which deal with the removal of the president from his post by two thirds of votes of the Congress of People's Deputies. Here they have far better chances to railroad the resolution that suits them, Podoprigora said. "Any of my colleagues may explain to his electorate in this case that he voted only for the amendment to the corresponding article of the constitution, and not for the removal of the president from his post," he explained.

Another step that the leadership of parliament could take is to persuade the Congress to vote by secret ballot on the problem of the president's impeachment. But in this case too the votes of the 80 people's deputies who have not yet made up their minds may play a decisive role, Podoprigora believes.

Opposition Blocs View Possible Results

LD2603144593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1422 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Yuriy Filippov]

[Text] Moscow March 26 TASS—If the 9th Congress does not support the demand for Yeltsin impeachment, the Russian Unity bloc of parliamentary factions will propose to introduce constitutional amendments on holding simultaneous pre-term elections of the president and deputies in fall, 1993, bloc coordinator Sergey Mikhaylov told a news conference here today.

If the congress supports the impeachment idea, the opposition, forecasting president actions, "is ready for various developments," he said.

If the congress rejects the impeachment, "the political situation may sharply deteriorate in 30-45 days, and the president will launch a new attack at the deputy corps," bloc leader Ilya Konstantinov told the news conference.

Bloc leaders rejected the referendum on confidence in the president as a possible basis for a compromise with Boris Yeltsin, and described it as the president's attempt "to make deputies hold pre-term parliamentary elections and abstain from pre-term presidential elections".

"The president-proposed plebiscite brings us back to the situation of a period before 1985, when there was only one name on the ballot sheet, and electors were offered to vote for the only candidate," said Russian Unity leader Mikhail Astafyev.

The opposition believes chances to reach a compromise with Boris Yeltsin in formation of a coalition government are scarce as well. "We cannot be in the government as long as Boris Yeltsin heads the executive power - this would bring to null our essential stand," stressed Astafyev.

Booths for 'Secret Vote' Set Up; Kremlin 'Calm'

LD2603082993 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0650 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Excerpts] We are expecting the Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation to start work and are now going over to the Great Kremlin Palace, where our correspondent Aleksandr Ruvinskiy is located.

[Ruvinskiy] [passage omitted] Around the Kremlin, at the approaches to it, at least from the Lenin Library side, everything is exceptionally quiet and calm. Here in the St. George Hall, as is usually the case before the start of the session, meetings of the deputies' factions have been taking place. These also have been very calm. [passage omitted]

Booths for a secret vote have been prepared in the St. George Hall. It is not yet clear what for. In one of the foyers, a few hours before the Congress opened, the famous picture of Lenin, Lenin speaking at the third Komsomol Congress, was removed. You probably remember it don't you? And another splendid canvas portraying the Christ the Savior Church has appeared in its place. It might be assumed that the communists will again protest about this because it spoils the historic appearance of the Kremlin, the way it looks. Incidentally, it was once the case that the presidium hall held a statue of Lenin.

Deputies have received masses of information of various kinds—legislative documents, the texts of the constitution and various laws—and a rough order of today's work at the Congress has been distributed. It is still the draft, which the Congress has to approve. So according to this draft, after the formation of working bodies and the approval of the agenda, it is proposed that Zorkin, the chairman of the Constitutional Court, give a report on urgent measures to preserve the Russian Federation's constitutional system. After this, he is to answer questions from the people's deputies, a discussion will then take place, resolutions will be adopted at the end of the day, and it is proposed that the Congress of People's Deputies should end today as well.

It is not clear from this proposed agenda, however, why there are booths for a secret vote. Moreover, a draft resolution on the formation of a tellers' commission, so that a secret vote can be held, has been distributed to deputies together with the other documents. Deputies have not yet received any other draft documents. [passage omitted]

Ninth Congress of People's Deputies Opens

LD2603073093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0723 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 26 TASS—The extraordinary 9th Congress of People's Deputies opened today at 10.00 [0700 GMT] at the Grand Kremlin Palace.

The parliament submitted for the consideration of the Congress the only item—"On Urgent Measures for the Preservation of the Constitutional System of the Russian Federation." Chairman of the Constitutional Court Valeriy Zorkin is planned to make a report on this issue.

President Yeltsin is attending the opening of the Congress. Responding to questions of journalists, who were waiting for him at the entrance to the palace, whether he was ready for compromises, Yeltsin said: "We have had enough compromises already." "By setting in my decree April 25 as the date of the voting of confidence or no-confidence in the president, I let the people decide my future," he added. According to preliminary information, the Congress will last one day.

Approves Two Items for Agenda

LD2603082793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0822 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 26 TASS—The 9th Congress of People's Deputies decided after almost an hour-long discussion to include two items in the agenda—"On Urgent Measures for the Preservation of the Constitutional System in the Russian Federation" and "On Stopping Political Censorship at TV."

Khasbulatov Delivers Opening Statement to Congress

LD2603091593 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0705 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Opening statement by Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov at the Ninth Extraordinary Congress of Russian People's Deputies at the Grand Kremlin Palace in Moscow—live]

[Text] Respected People's Deputies, respected President, respected Constitutional Court, government and guests of the Congress: The Ninth Extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation is declared open. [national anthem is played]

Let me make a traditional brief report, speech, or introduction.

Respected People's Deputies, respected President, respected Constitutional Court, members of the government and guests of the Congress: Once again developments in the country have compelled the Supreme Soviet to resort to convening an extraordinary congress. To our deep sorrow, apprehensions voiced in the last minutes of the previous Congress proved justified. Indeed, almost as soon as you returned home, we had to reconvene again. You are aware of the reason: It is the president's address on 20 March, which took the developments in the country away from a constitutional course. You are also aware of the position of the Supreme Soviet and the Constitutional Court. Now it is the turn of the congress. In accordance with the Constitution, it has the final say.

So what do we regard as the main problem? What is agitating society? The main thing is whether we succeed in taking the country back to the stable path of democratic development. Protection of democracy is the main reason why we have gathered here, whatever we may think. Present events have shown that democratic processes are yet to become irreversible, contrary to what we might have believed only very recently. Democratic rhetoric is by no means a guarantee against attempts to flout the Constitution. Democracy and constitutional legality are inseparable links in the same chain. No rational considerations can justify a violation of this organic link. Objectively, Russia has all the necessary prerequisites to carry out great transformations within the framework of legality and democracy.

First of all, at the last congress, we removed from the Constitution such uncharacteristic shrouds as temporary agreements and other exceptions.

Second, through difficult upheavals and conflicts, through the struggle in the course of implementing reforms, a trend toward public accord carves its way more and more in society, especially in society. There are no considerable forces in our country who would be prepared to renounce reform and turn back. In principle, it is impossible to return to the past. Even partisans of the communist idea are not aspiring to return to pre-reform plans of development. That is evident.

Third, a foundation has been laid for the structure of the federation based on a treaty concluded by the subjects of the federation, who are constituent parts of our Constitution. The developments that have taken place in the last few days have reaffirmed a huge positive potential of the subjects of the Federation and the decisive role of their stance, even in overcoming the constitutional crisis. Today, getting down to resolving the most acute power crisis, we must bear in mind constantly that it is in the failure of the results of the first stage of the economic reform that the current crisis takes its roots. Until a program of economic rebirth of the federation appears that understandable by the citizens and espoused by all important social and political forces, we are not insured against contradictions and shocks. It is important to make a link, in practice, between democracy and reforms. This is the main and most pressing challenge.

Unfortunately, we are confronted with an emergency: a desire to see one branch of power having monopoly on both the executive and the legislature. There are attempts even to back this up with somewhat of a theoretical base.

First, doubtless things are being pointed out, for instance that the country needs some order, and then, everything is brought down to the necessity of establishing a strong regime. It is being alleged that, failing that, these deputies standing in front of microphones would only stir up the country. Yes indeed, we need order and organization, but we will be able to achieve these goals only on the basis of a clear-cut division and efficient cooperation of powers. We also need a strong executive; today we do not have it. Parliament has been, in fact, cut off from forming the government; this has not been beneficial for economic reform. On the other hand, the activity of the government is literally stuck in the president's innumerable parallel structures. Ambitions aside, it is necessary to come back yet again to the law on government, to introduce appropriate amendments into the Constitution.

In a word, we need a strong government, accountable for what is happening in the country, alongside the parliament and the president. The strength of the executive should be based ever more on the interaction with the regions and on the formation of an operational vertical structure of power on this basis. How can the logic of our work be perceived? I believe we should hear the report of the Constitutional Court as well as the Russian Federation president's perception of the problem and of the ways of resolving the political impasse.

Next, the congress should discuss the problem in a calm, balanced way and adopt the appropriate decision. In the end, our congress ought to help take the situation back to a legal constitutional position, and based on this, to solve the contradictions that have arisen. It is to be hoped that we can find the only right solution, which would at least

take us closer to accord, and bring comfort to the hearts and minds of people. I pin my hopes on the wisdom of the congress participants. I would like to say that if deputies discern the reason is some sort of personality clash, I am prepared, without hesitation, to leave the post of chairman of the Supreme Soviet for the sake of accord.

Dear colleagues, we ought to embark on forming the bodies of the congress. If our Standing Orders Commission and people's deputies had had no objection, we could have approved all the bodies we had before—there seem to have been no complaints against them last time—and could have started to discuss the problem.

Urges Congress to 'Safeguard Democracy'

LD2603074293 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0730 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent]

[Text] Moscow March 26 TASS—The March 20 presidential address "has pushed the situation in the country out of the constitutional rut", and this is why the 9th Congress of People's Deputies was called, parliament speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov said here today, opening the top forum of Russian legislators.

He stressed that "the main question is whether we shall be able to guide the country towards a stable course of democratic development of not. The main purpose of our meeting today is to safeguard democracy".

'Ready To Resign' if Necessary

OW2603083493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0821 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In his opening statement at the 9th (extraordinary) Congress of the RF [Russian Federation] People's Deputies this Friday morning, Chairman of the RF Supreme Soviet Ruslan Khasbulatov said the situation in the country "needs to be brought to the constitutional and legal field, and then the solution will be found on this basis." He said the recent events in the Russian Federation revealed that "democratic processes have not become irreversible yet," and the roots of the ongoing controversy lie in the mistakes made in implementing the economic reform.

In the words of Ruslan Khasbulatov, democracy and constitutional law and order are inseparable links in the same chain," [single quotemark as received] therefore "no rationale can justify a disruption of this nexus," he said.

He called for the formation of a strong executive branch, admitting that "the detachment of the parliament from the formation of the government did not contribute to the success of the reforms." In the opinion of the parliament speaker, it would be necessary to once again address the law on the government and introduce conformable amendments into the RF Constitution.

Ruslan Khasbulatov proposed that the deputies hear the report by the RF Constitutional Court and President Yeltsin's vision of Russia's ways out of the political deadlock. Following that, the parliament speaker suggested, the Congress will pass its decision in a quiet atmosphere.

Ruslan Khasbulatov emphasized that if, in the opinion of the people's deputies, the primary reason for the ongoing controversy lies in the personality conflict, he is "ready to resign the office of chairman of the Supreme Soviet without any hesitations."

Yeltsin Arrives at Congress 'in a Working Mood'

OW2603081493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0804 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Upon his coming to the Congress venue, President Boris Yeltsin told journalists that he is "in a working mood." He emphasized that the intent of his decree was to enable the people of Russia to put to a vote their confidence in the president at the referendum on April 25.

The president said he was sure that the Russian people will support him. In his words, he draws this confidence from his personal contacts with people and the results of public opinion surveys.

Boris Yeltsin said he is grateful to the U.S. President and the American people for their expression of support to him at this trying moment.

Delivers Address

LD2603105593 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0939 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Speech by President Boris Yeltsin to the Ninth Congress of People's Deputies in the Grand Kremlin Palace in Moscow—live]

[Text] Esteemed Chairman, Esteemed Peoples Deputies: I want to set out my position on some issues on the agenda. Over the last few months, an agonizing quest for compromise which would have allowed the legislative and executive authorities to work normally in the country has been going on. One variant after another was proposed, and not a single one was adopted. This path was exhausted at the eighth congress. The crisis could be resolved with the help of a referendum, but the referendum was also frozen. The proposal of the speaker which was expressed today—I am in agreement with many of his constructive proposals. It is senseless to continue the conflict. Moreover, a part of what the chairman of the Constitutional Court said in his speech coincides with my program for resolving the constitutional crisis, and I support him in this. However,

adopting a new constitution remains the cardinal method for resolving the constitutional crisis. We have found ourselves in an impasse. That is why I had to use my right to protest to the people. After all, the country's president is bound by a state duty to guarantee stability and constitutional foundations in the conditions of radical reform. The obligation is placed on him to safeguard the integrity of the Russian Federation, to strengthen the sovereignty of its subjects, and to guarantee human rights and freedoms. He is obliged to implement the course of reforms which was proposed to the voters and supported by them.

The fulfillment of all these obligations in current conditions would require confirmation of the citizens' vote of confidence in their president. As is known, voting has been set for 25 April. The central question is confidence or no-confidence in Russia's president. On this day the voters will also state their view on the draft of the new constitution. I want to say straight away—in order to avert false interpretations—that as chairman of the Constitutional Commission I intend to propose a draft prepared by our commission and adopted by you, the congress, as a basis, at the Sixth Congress of People's Deputies. In addition, a chapter will be introduced there on the Federation Treaty. A resolution of the constitutional crisis cannot be put off any longer. It is threatening not only the future of reform, but the future of Russia and every Russian citizen. The erosion of state power and the vertical structures of administration is creating a real danger to the integrity of Russia. In view of all this, we cannot go on doing nothing. I say this with great alarm. After all, it has already become a sorry tradition when it is a matter of the fundamental problems of the constitutional system in Russia, a morbid unwillingness to examine them is manifested. Until now, the annual message of the Constitutional Court has been left without due attention. The past congress devoted only a few minutes to this matter.

Also awaiting its moment is a message of the president on constitutionality in Russia. Recently, serious work has been displaced more and more frequently by wordy exercises on the theme of loyalty to the Constitution and the composition of more and more new amendments. We are being burdened with endless amendments to the Constitution, and this leads to its destruction from within. If we do not want to discredit ourselves and the state totally in the eyes of Russian citizens, it is necessary to put an end to such a practice and adopt a new constitution.

Esteemed people's deputies, whatever political conflicts may be shaking the edifice of Russian statehood, it is the economy that remains the number one problem today. I am maintaining my position that I described at the previous congress. I worded it as follows: This year, we must concentrate our efforts on the economy, first and foremost. This is where our salvation lies. It is precisely in this sphere that the main dangers are concentrated. It is precisely the economy that demands maximum attention and full output today.

It must be admitted that the economic crisis was intensified also by our mistakes, which are now obvious. The working out of the trend of the course of reforms has been inefficient; there has been weak state support for the new forms of management and the new stratum of owners in the sphere of production; an absence of an effective anti-inflation policy; and excessive hopes placed on external aid.

A sharply negative role has been played in the slowing down of the flywheel of inflation by the uncontrolled policy of the central bank. As a result, there has been a sharp deterioration in the standard of living of the majority of Russians.

Moreover, it is not just their standard of living that has declined; their individual protection has tangibly weakened as well. It is precisely toward the resolution of these issues that our efforts must be directed. The government's proposals, in keeping with my decree concerning the stabilization of the economic situation have recently been received by me. The preparation of a whole, large package of documents is nearing completion on the basis of these proposals. In the nearest future they will be signed. Here are some of them: On urgent measures to stabilize the standard of living of the population of the Russian Federation in 1993; On measures of state support for peasant holdings and farms and the development of agricultural cooperatives; On purchases of goods and services using state resources.

In the nearest future, the government will adopt measures on additional welfare support for servicemen and their families. Measures concerning preferential credits, taxation, licensing for enterprises, howsoever they are owned, which work to satisfy the army's social needs are being elaborated. A decision has been made to raise the minimum wages as of April 1993. Grants for those in full time education and students will go up correspondingly. Guarantees of citizens's rights, including the privatization process, will be strengthened.

I have dwelled only on decisions that have important consequences for society, decisions that have already been prepared. However, the program of urgent steps also provides for decisions concerning a revision of benefits in foreign economic activities, the licensing of investments abroad, measures to support and develop the traditional economic and cooperative ties between Russia and the former CEMA countries and others.

Examination of the program will require a special debate at a government sitting and I think that this will take place in the next few days. I hope that the implementation of these measures will make it possible to give tangible momentum to reforms and that it will make for an abatement of political passions. A great deal has recently been said that the practice of correcting the economic course has failed to justify itself; that it is not alterations, but a new course of reforms that is needed. One may or may not agree with sentiments of this kind, but one thing is indubitable: it is essential that economic

changes acquire a vigorous social thrust and in this area a new course is, indeed, required, along with new, thought-out, and effective measures.

I agree that it is necessary to strengthen the government. However, only realistic steps are needed. There is the potential for that. In the first place, the cadre potential of Russian republics and regions must be put to use and I have sent each leader proposals concerning what he can give to the federal cadres, as it were, from among his own cadres, so as to support the government.

Second, candidates for the government can be submitted by responsible political forces, parties, and public movements. The main condition is this: People who come to work in the government have fully to meet the high and rigorous standards dictated by this difficult period. First of all, it is a question of professionalism and decency. If there are such candidates, if someone is prepared to vouch for them, Viktor Stepanovich [Chernomyrdin] and I are prepared to consider these nominations without delay.

I am convinced that neither political intrigues nor battles of words, but only practical work—primarily in the sphere of economy—will provide most solid guarantees of Russia's integrity. There is full understanding between the president and the government on this question. The basis for such work exists, not just in federal bodies, but in the federation as a whole.

In conclusion, I would like to address, I know, the majority of deputies. I do believe that you are sincerely committed to finding the best way out of the crisis. So do not let us allow ourselves to be pushed toward actions that would be dubious in both political and moral terms.

I think many voters are asking themselves what was the point of convening the Ninth Congress. This question is also addressed to yourselves, to people's deputies. It has already been raised today. It seems to me that the best possible answer would be as follows: The Ninth Congress has convened in order to make one decision only: to submit for nationwide vote on 25 April not only the question of confidence in the president, but also the question of confidence in the congress. [applause]

In conclusion, esteemed people's deputies, I would like to say that I have made my choice. I leave my fate in the hands of the most just and supreme judge: the people. I am confident that they are capable of adopting a worthy decision. So let us react with trust and respect to our fellow-citizens. As the saying goes, God forbid that we should embark on the road of confrontation with our own people, with their immutable right to people's power.

Thank you. [applause]

Constitutional Court Chairman Addresses Congress

LD2603104893 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0804 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Address by Constitutional Court Chairman Valeriy Dmitriyevich Zorkin at the Ninth Congress of People's Deputies in the Grand Kremlin Palace in Moscow—live]

[Text] [Zorkin] Respected Congress, respected President: At this difficult time it has fallen to me to step up to this rostrum. Such are the events and the circumstances. I am addressing the following to you on the instruction of the Constitutional Court.

[Supreme Soviet Chairman Khasbulatov, interrupting] Could you speak more loudly, Valeriy Dmitriyevich? Into the microphone and more loudly, please.

[Zorkin] Respected colleagues, as you know, a short time ago, in response to the 25 February 1993 request by the Russian Federation president with regard to speeding up our message, we submitted our message on the state of constitutional legality in the Russian Federation. In this message we drew your attention to the fact that the constitutional system of the Russian Federation is under threat; we also outlined several sore points, in our view catastrophically sore.

One sore point, in our view, consists in the fact that, as the message says, the confrontation between the legislative and the executive branches of power is continuing. We also drew attention to the fact that the Constitution contains certain contradictions that hamper normal interaction between branches of power. In this connection, the message highlighted the Constitutional Court's stance with regard to the correlation between, on the one hand, Articles 104 and 109—namely, those articles regulating the powers of the Congress and the Supreme Soviet—and on the other hand, those articles that reflect, first of all, the principle of division of powers, and the principle of federalism. The principle of division of powers is covered in Articles 1 and 3.

In our message we pointed out that the Constitutional Court will be solving this problem, proceeding from the premise that it should consider Article 104 in systematic conjunction with Article 3, with the principle of division of powers. In our opinion, this was in line with what the president, in effect, proposed to the Congress when he called for an amendment to Article 104, or for an interpretation of it.

You will also remember, respected People's Deputies, that against the background of a gradual intensification of the conflict between the branches of power, the first signs of which could be discerned as far back as March 1992, or at least the spring of that year, the Court made numerous attempts to appeal to the powers, and even made public statements on the issue. It warned that

unless accord was attained, the confrontation would lead to a situation that would place the future of Russia under threat.

In December 1992, as you will recall, the Court, at the request of the Congress and the president, acted as an arbitrator. There was an unequivocal reaction to this in society and among deputies themselves, but we could not see any alternative at the time. That was your own view. The agreement can be criticized, especially now, in March 1993, with hindsight, but really, this was a civilized sign that a solution to the crisis had to be sought not through confrontation but through agreement and cooperation between authorities who are, in principle, separated by the constitution.

This separation does not mean an absolute gulf between them. These are branches of a single state power. There is no way of proceeding other than by following this principle, by acting on the basis of this accord. Otherwise the Constitution of the Russian Federation will be destroyed.

The court found that both the Congress of People's Deputies—to be more precise, the legislative branch—that both the legislative branch and the executive branch are to a certain extent contravening the principle of separation of powers and creating this confrontational situation.

At the same time, esteemed People's Deputies, we drew your attention to the fact that, in the Constitutional Court's view, the main reason for the conflict is not only and not so much the text of the Constitution but the authorities' failure to abide by the Constitution. The Constitution currently in force contains the principle of separation of powers and the principle of a federal system. There are also articles which, when taken together, can be described as a declaration of the rights of the individual and the citizen.

We ask you this question: Can these articles be called the Brezhnev Constitution, in the sense in which we have got accustomed to viewing the text of what is indeed the Brezhnev Constitution? Are you really saying that this Constitution does not give scope for compromise? We do not agree with that assertion. When they say that the time for compromise has passed, this signifies that the final resort of rulers has begun. This is a dangerous move, because it signifies an intention to abide not by the Constitution but by some other criteria. This signifies a violation of constitutional principles, no matter who such remarks may come from.

The events since the Eighth Congress could have developed in various ways, we believe. The president undoubtedly took offense at the Congress in some respects. In some respects the Congress took offense at the president, but I recall the final speech here by the head of the Russian Federation Government. If I am not mistaken, he was applauded when he left this rostrum. The question arises: If the government felt that it was impossible to operate on the basis of this Constitution, why could it not have resorted once again to the procedure of consultation?

Why did the conflict develop in such a way that suddenly, on Saturday, 20 March, it comes to my attention that a decree is being prepared along with an address by the Russian Federation president, as you have heard. The address was delivered to the people of Russia and the draft decree was endorsed by state officials 20 March 1993. The president had practically presented the decree. He said in his address: I have decided; I have signed a decree. He then read the basic clauses of this decree. You know what happened after that.

I would like once more to draw your attention to the Constitutional Court's actions before this. As you can see from the press and the media, the clauses of the Law on the Constitutional Court are being urgently analyzed. The points violated by the Constitutional Court are being enumerated.

But I have a question. What should the Constitutional Court do if we learn that an address is even being prepared in which it is explained that a decree has been signed containing a list of clauses—including one, for example, that says: In accordance with the decree, any decisions taken by organs and officials that cancel or halt the president's decrees or instructions or government resolutions have no legal base? Can we really convene to start proceedings after the decree has been delivered and implemented?

Similarly, I would like to draw your attention to another clause: The vertical line of Russia's executive organs has been restored. The heads of executive power and the governments of entities within the Russian Federation are directly accountable to the Russian president and government. Their power cannot be removed without a decision by the president of the Russian Federation.

I would like to ask esteemed President Shaymiyev, or other heads of republics, how they regard this clause. What do their constitutions say on this matter? What does the Russian Constitution say regarding the president's power? And what should it be called when all this has been prepared as a draft decree?

What if it is nothing—just an address outlining intentions? What do you then call the preparation for an anticonstitutional change to the framework of the state?

As a result, the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation sent President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin the following statement with my signature. This was done at 1730 on 20 March 1993, after we discussed this question in court. Esteemed Boris Nikolayevich, the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation learned that the Russian Federation president had prepared a draft decree on special rule [osobyy rezhim upravleniya] until the crisis of power is overcome. The publication of this decree would, in essence, have meant the halting of

the validity of the basic principles of the Russian Constitution with all of the consequences for you stemming from this.

Such actions would not only not make it easier to overcome the crisis of power but on the contrary would lead to further destabilization of society and push the country into the abyss of confrontation and chaos and make its disintegration a reality. If you put that enactment into operation, you would discredit yourself as president of Russia and condemn the 150 million-strong multinational people to harsh trials.

This could be avoided if you were to make use of the opportunities opened up after the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies to come forward with the idea of national accord and become the leader of the whole nation, thus promoting the stability of power and the implementation of reforms within the framework of the Constitution and the laws of the Russian Federation. You still have this chance. Make use of it.

When articles appear in the press criticizing our actions we wonder: Can we not send this appeal to the president under the provisions of Point 6 of Article 21 of the Law on the Constitutional Court and of the Law on the Constitutional Court in general. It envisages a case in which the Court is sitting and its powers are not being blocked, as well as the legislative power, in these unique and extreme circumstances. It was by proceeding on the basis of these considerations that the Court determined the actions it took.

You know the subsequent events. We assembled for a sitting of the Constitutional Court but we are now being that we violated procedures because we did not invite anyone. I consider it my duty, and on the Court's instructions, to inform you that we twice sent written invitations to the relevant persons and sent four telephoned telegrams. The sitting of the Constitutional Court was attended by Press Minister Fedotov, by Filatov, head of the president's administration, and by Deputy Prime Minister Shakhray. Where were the other persons to whom we sent invitations?

We cleared up some of the circumstances. At the same time, in accordance with the same procedures I told you about, the Constitutional Court sent out demands requiring the immediate presentation of the official text of the address and all documents connected with its preparation and with the preparation of the draft decree I mentioned. I received documents in response to this demand only in the evening of 23 March and this package contained the address and two decrees concerning the mass media, the protection of the mass media and some other decree on this same subject. We did not receive the main document which would have made it possible to decipher the president's intentions, his actions and decisions. Moreover, we were assured that this enactment simply did not exist.

I assure you that such an enactment does exist, and that it is countersigned by state officials. We adopted a conclusion of the Constitutional Court. It was submitted to the Supreme Soviet and was sent to the president.

I draw your attention to the fact that even this was subjected to a vile falsification, in that the media announced in a massive chorus that the chairman of the Constitutional Court handed the text to the president at his mother's funeral. I have not recently encountered a more disgraceful act by the media. [noises in hall]

Proceeding from the sense of Point 3 in Article 121 and Point 5 of the Constitution, we considered that the president's address containing the key words I mentioned just now were not just intentions as such, but were a designation of actions and decisions.

At the same time, in the Constitutional Court's conclusion, esteemed People's Deputies, esteemed president, we noted that we share the president's pain and alarm over the state of affairs that has developed, over the fact that we are in a crisis. We agree that it is necessary to emerge from this crisis, and that the president has the right to take certain steps; and we noted, in that connection, the president's proposal for a nationwide poll, and so on.

But we considered that, on the whole, that address contains a number of unconstitutional clauses, and from that we drew the following conclusion—that the address by the Russian Federation president to the citizens of Russia on 20 March 1993, in which he announced his actions and decisions to introduce a special rule procedure within the country until the crisis of power is resolved, does not correspond, in a number of its clauses, noted above, to parts 1 and 2 of Article 1, part 1 of Article 3, part 2 of Article 4, Article 5, part 3 of Article 81.5, part 5 of Article 104, and Articles 132.2 and 136.4 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and also to the Federation Treaty, Article 7 of which reads: The differentiation of objects of authority and powers between the federal organs of state power of the Russian Federation and the organs of power of the sovereign republics within the Russian Federation. This conclusion was, I repeat, sent to the Supreme Soviet and to the president of the Russian Federation.

After that, a series of events occurred, and among them we are obliged to note such an event as the generally continuing confrontation in society between the authorities. Proceeding from this, I could, for instance, announce the following: The Russian Voters' Association sent an appeal to the president saying: We demand that you, the first president elected by the whole people... [incomplete sentence as heard] This is followed by various points, including a demand to intern Rutskoy, Khasbulatov, Zorkin, Stepankov, Skokov, Ryabov, and Voronin, and calling on the president to instruct an acting procurator general, appointed by the president, to institute criminal proceedings against them for inciting the violent overthrow of a president legally elected by the people.

Esteemed People's Deputies, esteemed President, if such calls prevail in society—calls by the authorities for mutual disqualification and calls by the people for the mutual disqualification of the warring sides, outside the Constitution—Russia will perish.

Proceeding from this, the Constitutional Court passed an appeal on these events to the citizens of the Russian Federation, to the Russian Federation president, to the Congress of People's Deputies, and to the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, to the highest organs of state power, to the heads of executive power in the republics within the Russian Federation, to the soviets of people's deputies, and to the heads of administration at all levels.

The crisis of power, the confrontation between the legislative and executive authorities have reached a critical level. The Constitutional Court's appeal to the president, to the Congress of People's Deputies, and to the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, to find constitutional means and ways out of the state of crisis, to achieve the normalization of the socio-political situation in the country should be heard.

The striving by the sides to employ extreme measures—such as suspending the president from office on the one hand, and, on the other hand, effectively removing from power the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet which were legally elected by universal ballot—could lead to catastrophic consequences for the constitutional structure of Russia and cause an explosion in society. No unilateral actions by any branch of power will resolve the crisis. There is no unity in the army and the other structures of power.

In the critical situation which has arisen, the Constitutional Court calls on the sides to display wisdom, to display a feeling of responsibility for the fate of the country, Russian statehood, and the people of Russia, and proposes that the following urgent measures be taken. The basis for cooperation between the legislative and executive authorities and agreement could be furnished by the confirmation by the Congress of People's Deputies of the stability of the constitutional system of the Russian Federation, including democracy, respect for human rights, federalism, and division of powers. The Congress of People's Deputies could adopt a decision on the participation of the republics and other subjects of the federation in the drawing up of a new draft constitution of the Russian Federation and the possible putting of these principles or the entire constitution to the referendum.

The clauses of Articles 104 and 109 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation should be made to correspond to the principles of division of powers, fixed in Articles 1 and 3 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation. At the same time, the Congress could adopt a law on the Constitution which would make it possible to reject the Congress of People's Deputies as an independent legislative body and to hold elections to a bicameral parliament, taking into account the interests of both the Federation as a whole as well as of all its subjects, including the republics, krays, oblasts, autonomous oblasts, and autonomous okrugs.

It is necessary to urgently adopt laws on elections, on the referendum, on political parties and public associations, as well as on the responsibility for noncompliance with decisions of the Constitutional Court. We should adopt a constitutional amendment on the possibility of early presidential election and election of people's deputies of the Russian Federation and, on this basis, adopt a resolution and set the date of their simultaneous elections in Autumn 1993, provided the president agrees.

For the period until the new election, the government will be reinforced. The government must base its work on the principles of professionalism and national consensus. For the above period, the Congress will reaffirm the firm stability of the division of powers, of the relevant powers of the president, of the Congress, and of the Supreme Soviet, and will introduce a moratorium on constitutional changes in this area. People's Deputies of the Russian Federation will keep their status and guarantees of their activities for the whole term of their powers.

Fulfilling its duty to defend the constitutional system, the Constitutional Court took urgent measures to assess, from the constitutional point of view, the actions and the decisions of the Russian Federation president, expressed in his 20 March 1993 address to the citizens of Russia. When on 23 March 1993 the president published his decree on the operation of executive bodies until the crisis of powers is overcome, he acted in the spirit of many provisions and conclusions of the Constitutional Court's document on his address to the citizens of Russia.

The Constitutional Court is prepared to further enact the powers granted to it by the Constitution and laws in order to decisively defend the constitutional rights and liberties of citizens, the rights of republics and other members of the Federation, and of the executive and the legislative powers with the goal of facilitating their coordinated activity based on the Constitution and law.

Summing up these conclusions—could you please pass me these texts—summing up all these conclusions, I would like to point out yet again that the Congress proposes, as a legislative initiative, as one may put it, to adopt the following constitutional amendments and to provide a legislative backing to the following proposals:

1. The Congress of People's deputies must reconfirm the firm stability of the fundamental principles of the constitutional system of the Russian Federation, including democracy, respect for human rights, federalism, and delimitation of powers, as a foundation for the interaction between the executive and the legislative powers and for the consensus between them.

2. The Congress adopts a resolution on participation of republics and other members of the Federation in preparing a new draft constitution and draft principles of the constitutional system and on submitting them for the referendum.

3. Clauses of Articles 104 and 109 of the Constitution must be brought in line with the principle of the delimitation of powers enshrined in Articles 1 and 3 of the Constitution.

4. To adopt a constitutional law that would allow elections to be carried out for a bicameral parliament and not to have the Congress as an independent legislative body.

5. To urgently adopt laws on the election and the referendum, on political parties and public associations, as well as on the responsibility for noncompliance with decisions of the Constitutional Court.

6. To adopt a Constitutional amendment on provision for early election of the president and of people's deputies and to set the date for this election for the autumn of 1993, provided it is with the agreement of the president.

7. Until the new election, the government is to be reinforced on the principles of professionalism and national consensus.

8. The Congress reaffirms the firm stability of the division of powers, of the relevant powers of the president, the congress, and the Supreme Soviet, and introduces a moratorium on constitutional changes in this area.

9. People's deputies will keep their status and the guarantees of their activities for the whole term of their powers.

10. Persons responsible for misleading the president when preparing the address and the decree must bear responsibility and be removed from their posts.

Thank you for your attention.

Answers Deputies' Questions

LD2603144093 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0834 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Question and answer session with Valeriy Dmitriyevich Zorkin, chairman of the Constitutional Court, at the Russian Supreme Soviet session in the Grand Kremlin Palace in Moscow—live]

[Excerpts] [Khasbulatov] Thank you, Valeriy Dmitriyevich Zorkin. Esteemed colleagues, it is necessary... [changes thought] Valeriy Dmitriyevich, now you will probably reply to a few questions. And I will put the following to the vote: it is proposed to relay the congress. I am putting this to the vote. [passage omitted]

Please vote on whether the congress should be relayed in full. Voting is in progress. It is adopted.

[Khasbulatov] Valeriy Dmitriyevich [Zorkin] replies. Esteemed Congress, how much time shall we allot to replies? [shouts] What? Questions, Valeriy Dmitriyevich. Grigoriy Petrovich, please explain how much time we will allocate to this? perhaps we can agree as follows: until the break?

Valeriy Dmitriyevich, do you agree? We must ask you. Is this fine? Until the break? Fine.

First microphone, Deputy Shustov, please go ahead.

[Shustov, from the 66th territorial constituency], People's Deputy Shustov. Valeriy Dmitriyevich, you mentioned the words sovereignty of the people. This is the second article, that the people can exercise its right directly, that is to say, through the referendum. Why did the Constitutional Court not mention the unconstitutional actions of the Supreme Soviet and the Congress which refused the people the right to a referendum for which 2.6 million signatures were collected?

[Zorkin] Esteemed people's deputy, you remember the situation which developedg around the referendum. If my memory serves me right, all republics, krays, and oblasts—or almost all—stated that a referendum would be inexpedient. [shouts] If one bears in mind... [shouting continues] if one bears, if one bears in mind...

[Khasbulatov, interrupting] Quiet please. Colleagues, quiet please. Go ahead.

[Zorkin] If one bears in mind that the situation and the conditions in the country are such, then I probably think that they were entitled to state these misgivings. But the Constitutional Court did not tackle the matter because there was no application on this subject. The Constitutional Court received an application on the decision of this latest congress. And please note that we quickly adopted it for examination. Many said: Why aren't you getting on with it? It was immediately set in motion and adopted for examination and now it is in the pipeline.

[Khasbulatov] Yes, please, second microphone.

[Bratishchev] People's Deputy Bratishchev. Esteemed Valeriy Dmitriyevich, I think that the Constitutional Court has nothing to justify itself for. At least, what I understood is that the first part of your report was devoted to a justification of this kind. I think that the majority of people's deputies and voters, at least my voters, consider that the Constitutional Court is correct.

[Unidentified speaker shouts question]

[Bratishchev] That is why I want to ask not one question, as is being shouted here by the most fervent supporters of one side but three questions. Well, the first question. Well, I have learned that inhabitants are being invited to the housing maintainance offices in Moscow and for three rubles they are issued with an envelope which contains the text of a statement addressed to the deeply esteemed president requesting 0.15 hectares of land in Moscow oblast. Well, I would like to ask the president

whether he knows of this operation and you, Valeriy Dmitriyevich, whether this action is constitutional. This is the first question.

Second question. Do you and the leadership of the government know of the true price of the voucher which has formed to date?

[Khasbulatov] Please ask questions which are to the point.

[Bratishchev] This is also, so to speak, a violation of the people's constitutional rights which are being mentioned here so vigorously.

[Khabulatov] Questions!

[Bratishchev] And my third question. Well, give me a second and I'll remember. Two days ago, central television carried a feature on the presidential council sitting. This sitting was headed not by the president but, so to speak, by one of his supporters. Is the presence of any presidential councillors constitutional? And an analogy arises here for me: If the Fily [military] council [in 1812] had been conducted not by Kutuzov but by his adjudant, then the French would probably have reached Kamchatka. Please reply to this question.

[Zorkin] Respected people's deputy, with regard to your first question, we spoke of this in our address. Unless the citizens of Russia, all of us, take patience and realize that we are not one another's enemies but brothers and fellow-russians, unless this happens, we will all perish. No one will benefit from this, and there will be a head-on clash.

Second, with regard to vouchers. I cannot speak on this matter, because an application has been filed to us concerning this matter. We will check the constitutionality of the relevant acts, their compliance with the constitution. [passage omitted]

[Ivanov] Deputy Ivanov, district 556. Respected Valeriy Dmitrievich, I think you have set the tone really well for the centrists at the Congress of People's Deputies. We have not gathered here to ask who is to blame, but to ask what should be done in this situation we now have both in Russia and at the congress. First of all, any constitutional judge knows that when the principle of division of powers was enshrined in the constitution, in Articles 1 and 3, that meant that Article 104, Part 2 came into conflict with this, as well as Article 109, Point 26, and Article 104, point 14. They were all at variance with the principle of division of powers. Why didn't the Constitutional Court immediately use its right of legislative initiative, as set out in Article 110, to bring the constitution into line with the principle of division of powers straight away?

Moreover, a group of deputies applied to you long before the Eighth Congress with regard to Article 104, Part 2. What did the deputies' application do being left lying idle for so long? Why is it not being examined even now?

Second, a group of deputies protested against the decision on constitutionality made at the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies. Why has it not been dealt with either? Do you not feel that you are also to blame for the constitutional crisis we are now facing? Had you, the Constitutional Court, used your right of legislative initiative in good time, we would not be arguing now about whether to give all power to the soviets or to stick to the division of powers.

Now the second question. Do you think it would be correct to say that the Constitutional Court observed all the procedures in examining the case of the president's address? Have there been no violations on the part of the Constitutional Court itself? Thank you.

[Zorkin] As for the first question, concerning Articles 104, 106, 110, and so on—you may also mention Article 109, being at variance with Articles 1 and 3. In all its rulings, the Constitutional Court proceeded from the principle of division of powers. There was not a single ruling in which we used Article 104 as interpreted unilaterally. On the basis of these cases, having examined these cases, we submitted the message to the Congress of People's Deputies. It contains all there is to say about it. But I reiterate, there is no point in reducing the problem to what was infelicitously put in the constitution. We in the Constitutional Court believe that this is not the whole problem, far from it. The main thing is that one should abide by the principles set down in the Constitution, and they are there.

Second, concerning the decision of the eighth congress. I would like to inform the respected people's deputy that the Constitutional Court received this application on 16 march. Did it say that the president's duties were not being carried out any more, that the duties of the Constitutional Court were not being carried out any more? Do we not have set terms for examining such applications? It is only 26 March today. This application has undergone preliminary examination; it is being dealt with by a Constitutional Court judge.

Materials for a court sitting are being prepared on the basis of this application. There in nothing to prevent us from examining this matter.

Third, concerning the Constitutional Court. Yes, we are guilty, guilty of a failure to save the situation in such a way as to prevent what is happening here today. I believe, however, that it is not only the Constitutional Court, but all of us together. That is why we are urging you to accept the solutions we are proposing. No doubt, probably, one could look at the Law on the Constitutional Court. Let us also look once again at the situation that had arisen. Could we wait, say, another 10 days to hand the materials to the sides? What might have ensued, after the words were spoken, and all that? I believe the point is somewhat different. It is that it is now time to come to our senses, to collect ourselves, and to live in accordance with the Constitution or to draw up a new one if you don't like this one, but if someone

unilaterally says that the constitution is unconstitutional, he is placing everyone else in exactly the same position. We lose the legal foundation, which is the only thing that can unite the president, the legislature, the court, the citizens, the parties, the republics, and so on. If the president or the legislature leaves this framework, why should others stay within it? Think about it, respected people's deputies.

[Khasbulatov] Fourth microphone, please.

[Kibirev] Kibirev, District 178. [passage omitted] What do you think of the following idea: In your capacity as chairman of the Constitutional Court, you take the initiative and make the president, the vice president, the chairman of the Supreme Soviet, and our prime minister sit in front of television cameras and tell us what is going on in the country, what grievances the branches of power have against each other, and what are the possible ways out of this situation. [passage omitted]

[Zorkin] I am ready for any, I am ready to implement any ideas for the sake of a consensus in the country. I think that you now have an excellent opportunity of becoming aware of this and to make appropriate decisions. I am not saying that those which we are proposing—please understand me correctly—we simply proposed a rough plan, so to say, a model for getting out of the crisis and stabilizing the constitutional structure. I think that if you resolve this today we will not simply sit down in front of the televisions but perhaps shake each other by the hand and smile.

[Khasbulatov] Number five, please.

[Zadonskiy] Zadonskiy, territorial constituency number 34. Esteemed people's deputies, presidium, esteemed chairman of the Constitutional Court, in accordance with the law, immediately after the speech by the court chairman, i propose giving the floor to judge Ametistov with his special opinion. [passage omitted] My question is this: You have virtually just repeated in your speech that the situation is so dramatic that you, as chairman of the court, consider deviations from the law to be possible. [passage omitted]

[Khasbulatov] Please finish. What is your question? Finish. Turn off the microphone please. That is enough. I cannot even remember how many questions you have asked. Please reply.

[Zorkin] Esteemed people's deputies, I would remind you that the Law on the Constitutional Court did not foresee the circumstances which pertained on 20 March. Nonetheless, the Constitutional Court instructed the chairman to speak and at 1730, we sent—I repeat once again—a message to the president of the Russian Federation on the basis of our main responsibility to protect the Constitutional Court. The president did not reply to this. I could not get through to him by telephone. In these conditions, being guided by Article 21, Point 6, I made this representation in the form of making my position public.

I had no other way out, and I believe that if it had so happened after this that the people had kept silent and no one had spoken out, I do not know what would have happened next, but subsequently the Constitutional Court would not have been able to discharge its duties to the full. I recall the experience of the Committee for Overseeing the Constitution and I am able to learn from experience.

[Khasbulatov] Microphone number six.

[Shabad] Shabad, Constituency number 37. First of all, I support the proposal by Deputy Zadonskiy that Constitutional Court Judge Ametistov be given the floor to explain his special opinion which he has the right to do under the Law of the Constitutional Court, and now my question. On 19 March, that is last Friday, the Constitutional Court adopted a decision on a petition filed by a group of People's Deputies almost a year ago. It adopted a resolution on this. The resolution recognizes that 27 resolutions by the chairman of the Supreme Soviet and his deputy chairmen, adopted during 1991 and the beginning of 1992, contradict and fail to comply with the constitution. My question, is does the Constitutional Court not wish to adopt a conclusion as an intiative, rather than a resolution on this matter, in accordance with Article 74 on the Constitutional Court. This would set in motion the mechanism of liability, for calling individuals, higher state officials, to account where they systematically violate the Russian Federation's constitution. I have Mr. Khasbulatov in mind. I also envisage this resolution applying to the period up to April 1992. Numerous other such violations may be counted during the year which has passed since that time.

[Zorkin] Esteemed people's deputies, you have called upon the Constitutional Court to observe the Law on the Constitutional Court. I will remind you that that law which you, esteemed people's deputies, adopted and you probably voted for, states the following, that the special opinion of the Constitutional Court is set forth in the form of an appendix to the decision when the HERALD of the Constitutional Court is published. If you want to take advantage of Article 104, Part 2, that the congress can take it upon itself to examine and resolve any issue—I understand that you are speaking in favor of abolishing that part—then let Judge Ametistov address you.

Second, but for that you will have to violate the Law on the Constitutional Court. Yes, we did examine the decision. We adopted a decision recently. But it is a question of one decision in connection with which we made a presentation at the Constitutional Court about violations. I categorically reject your statement that this has taken more than a year. The application was submitted on 6 or 7 July. I will ask a secretary to find out exactly. But on approximately that date, 6 or 7, and at that time, as you know, people's deputies, we were examining the case of the CPSU and we did not have the right to examine other applications at the Constitutional

Court until we finished that. That came to an end. Its turn came, and we examined that. Naturally, if something happened to prevent us from assembling at the congress or the court was deprived of its powers, then perhaps we would have resolved that instantly.

Yes, I apologize, there is yet another thing. Now you are calling for this to be resolved according to the procedure of Article 74. Esteemed peoples deputies, you adopted the Law on the Constitutional Court, and Article 74 directly bans the court from examining in its conclusion the subject of a petition being dealt with by the court. If you amend the article, then we can possibly examine your or our initiative.

Deputy Tarasov Calls For Yeltsin's Removal

LD2603144993 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1026 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Address by Deputy Boris Vasilyevich Tarasov to the Ninth Congress of People's Deputies in the Grand Kremlin Palace in Moscow—live]

[Text] Esteemed President, esteemed Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, esteemed Congress: Today we face a moment which is indeed of fateful significance for Russia. At the start of my speech I would like to share with you my personal feelings and emotions. I have not revealed these to anyone before. Not until now.

For a long time, I have followed Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's activities with empathy and hope. I remember him after his speech at the 26th CPSU Congress, beaming and happy after his new speech. I will even admit it to you, Boris Nikolayevich, bitter as it may sound in a certain context, but I will nonetheless admit that I worshipped you. [shouts in audience] Yes! There is no irony in my words. I did worship Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin at one stage. Even when I was in Afghanistan, in a well-known combat situation, I asked all those coming or flying in from Moscow to bring me shorthand reports of his speeches and documents. At the time he was first secretary of the Moscow Party Committee.

Today, however, I must say that I highlight this not for its own sake, but to say that the subsequent period was a time of my bitter disappointment in his activities and in the direction of his policies. With all responsibility, I must say that, generally speaking, this feeling has developed into indignation, specifically since the declaration of Russia's independence and especially later, during a particularly reckless, and I would say irresponsible, move onto the stage of shock therapy. The results of this policy are commonly known.

But today I cannot but say with bitterness that this policy has in fact deprived us in a single year of our status as a great power. Yesterday the Russian Federation's 1993 budget was discussed. We find the budget was adopted with a colossal deficit. The state has no money for anything. Output slumped abysmally by 39 percent in three years. We have lost just about a half of our industrial output.

Let me remind you that in 1941, when the Germans were near Moscow and we had lost Ukraine and Belorussia, production fell by only 34 percent. Read [economist] Voznesenskiy if you doubt this. We have lost 39 percent. Under our very eyes, anything involving intensive scientific research or advanced technologies is being lost. We are losing our statehood!

Yesterday the budget was discussed. We are not crying out loud that this budget is bursting at the seams right, left, and center, simply because the state is conducting ideology-oriented policies today, policies directed at creating a layer of rich and middle- class owners who must be relieved of as many taxes today and so on. For two of years already, certain republics have not been paying their federal taxes.

Incidentally, this slogan of adopting and swallowing [as heard] more and more sovereignties brings as you can see even new proposals today: to replace constitutional bodies of power with some new formations which in practical terms will mean Russia's disintegration.

We can see for ourselves how people's everyday lives have fundamentally changed. Go into Moscow's bread shops and you will see intelligent old ladies who say nothing but whose eyes are praying for a piece of bread. And when people give it to them they take it with gratitude because there is nowhere they can buy this bread. Look what's happening to our young people. Look at what's happening in the sphere of foreign policy: seas of blood, colossal sacrifices made in order to possess the warm and northern seas, starting from Ivan the Terrible, have been wasted. We have no bases or even moorage facilities there today. Our forward boundaries have been thrown right back toward Asia. Doubts are being cast on our status as a state.

Look what treaties are now being proposed for ratification, even the START II treaty. No one is against nuclear and missile disarmament, but to liquidate, and totally liquidate, everything our people have paid for with colossal sacrifices, by reducing their living standards and by emptying our villages, and to give away everything that makes up the basis and the hallmark of a great power—this is, at the very least, irresponsible. It is more than that: it is tantamount to state treason, a betrayal of our state interests.

When one thinks about all this, one naturally starts wondering what is the point, and who benefits from this. This is not the first time I have spoken from this rostrum. I am firmly convinced—I critically analyzed my thoughts during many sleepless nights and I am convinced—that the point lies not in the existence of some kind of political power crisis, but in the fact that this is a crisis in the policies of the president and of those close to him. This is a crisis of the government, a crisis of policies which are not accepted by the people of Russia,

not accepted by the very mentality of our people. These policies are doomed to failure.

I am convinced that even if this Congress fails to match up to its task, these policies will still be rejected by the people sooner or later, but with even more sacrifices.

Therefore, esteemed deputies, I am also calling upon both the president and the Supreme Soviet and the Congress to show great state wisdom in tackling the issue we are discussing today.

We must really create conditions which will enable our people to work normally, ensure that all the cog wheels of our production start working, and enable us to restore the ruble—that derelict and destroyed monetary unit of ours—and so on.

But I believe that the main and decisive condition of any improvement, of any calming down and normalization of political life, should be—and I say this openly—to ask whether Russian President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin has the ability to continue to head the state in a balanced manner and without the steps like this which stirred up the whole of our society.

Therefore, I think and propose that, using the procedure established in Article 121/10, the president's ability to continue heading the Russian Federation should be assessed at this Congress. If this proposal fails to receive the required majority, it should be included in a referendum as the president asks. Thank you.

Deputies Express Views on Impeachment

OW2603141193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1338 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Viktor Stepanov, chairman of the parliament of Karelia, a republic within the Russian Federation, believes the Congress of People's Deputies should not impeach President Boris Yeltsin since, in his view, this may lead to a crisis similar to the Yugoslav one. He urged the congress to support the draft for a law setting up a consultative body called the Federation Council. The draft had been distributed among deputies.

He also insisted that the congress support Yeltsin's proposal on holding a referendum on confidence in the President and suggested that Russia's legislative branch be re-elected before its term expired.

Nina Solodilova of the Communists of Russia parliamentary group strongly criticized the President and his staff. She said the activities of members of Yeltsin's staff, where the key positions were held by activists from the Democratic Russia movement, were motivated by personal interests.

Solodilova demanded that Yeltsin be dismissed and a referendum be held on the abolition of the presidency in Russia.

People's Deputy Boris Tarasov described the decision to use "shock therapy" as a method to normalize the economy as "irresponsible". This had deprived Russia of its "superpower" status in a matter of a year, he said.

People's Deputy Maria Sorokina, one of Yeltsin's proxies during his presidential election campaign, moved that the congress dismiss him for "betraying the ideals of democracy." However, Yeltsin's voluntary resignation would be the best solution, she said.

Congress Adopts Draft Resolution on Council of Federation

OW2603141593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1338 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Congress of People's Deputies has adopted a resolution which envisages changes in Article 104 of the Constitution and the adoption of a resolution on the establishment of the Council of the Federation.

According to it, on its own initiative, or at the request of the constituent entities, of the congress, parliament, the president or the government, this body shall have the right to consider and provide recommendations on any issue pertaining to the Federation Treaty.

The draft constitution and changes in and additions to it, draft laws on the federal bodies of authority and government, the questions raised during referenda, and the decisions on the impeachment of president, on the early dissolution of the Congress and parliament, and on re-drafting the state borders shall be approved with mandatory prior consultations with the Federation Council. This body shall also use conciliatory procedures to settle disagreements between the supreme bodies of state authority and government and between the constituent entities.

*** The congress's Drafting Commission has also prepared a resolution on the stabilization of the constitutional system which says that the Federation Treaty, a vitally-important part of the Russian Constitution, does not work.

It proposes in this connection that an agreement on the implementation of the Federation Treaty be reached and that, through the Council of the Federation, the constituent entities be included in the decision-making process. That way the Russian state and constitution will be protected from arbitrary and thoughtless decisions of the federal and regional authorities.

Summary of Ninth Congress of People's Deputies

LD2603123193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1224 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Lyudmila Yermakova]

[Text] Moscow March 26 TASS—"The protection of democracy is the main thing for which we got together here," Chairman of the Russian Parliament Ruslan Khasbulatov said, opening the 9th Congress of People's Deputies at the Grand Kremlin Palace today. The March 20 address of the president "took the development of the situation in the country off the constitutional course," he said.

The parliament submitted for the consideration of the Congress the only item—"On Urgent Measures for the Preservation of the Constitutional System in the Russian Federation". Various suggestions were made during an hour-long discussion. For instance, it was suggested that the Congress should be stopped, "and all the expenses involved should be reimbursed by its organisers who seek to further their political ambitions at the Congress." Some people's deputies demanded the discussion "Of Measures to Protect the System Against the Illegal Actions of Legislators and the Judicial Authority." However, those proposals, as well as the idea on the need for discussing by the Congress of the president's message on the state of constitutional legality, which was left unnoticed by the parliament, were turned down. Only one more item was included in the agenda—"On the Termination of Political Censorship at TV."

At the request of the parliament, President Yeltsin is attending the Congress.

Chairman of the Constitutional Court Valeriy Zorkin, who made a report on legal matters, urged "to look for a way out of the crisis not through confrontation, but through accord and cooperation of the branches of authority, divided in accordance with the constitution." "Their division does not mean a break between them, these are the branches of a single system of state authority," he stressed. Confrontation between various branches will "threaten Russia's future."

On behalf of the Constitutional Court Zorkin urged the two sides to display commonsense and suggested, as the legislative initiative, the adoption of corresponding constitutional amendments and the creation of a legal basis for the following proposal: "The Congress should reiterate the unshakable character of the basic principles of the constitutional system of the Russian Federation, including people's power, respect for human rights, federalism and the division of authority; it should adopt a resolution on the participation of the republics and other subjects of the federation in drafting a new constitution and principles of the constitutional system and on putting the issue to a referendum; it should adopt a law making it possible to do away with the Congress as an independent legislative authority and hold elections to a two- chamber parliament; it should urgently adopt laws on the elections, the referendum, political parties and public associations; it should adopt an amendment to the constitution on a possibility of pre-term elections of the president and people's deputies and name the date for them with the consent of the president—the Autumn of 1993; it should reinforce the government for a period until the new elections in accordance with the principles of professionalism and national accord; the Congress should confirm the invariability of the division of authority, of the prerogatives of the president, the Congress and the Parliament and introduce in that part a moratorium on amendments to the constitution; people's deputies should retain their status and guarantees of their parliamentary activities for the whole of their term of office; people who misled the president during the working out of the address and the decree should be punished and removed from office."

After Zorkin's report people's deputies asked him questions until the break. "The scale of political values has been made as narrow as possible. Let us compete in the wisdom of agreement, rather than the struggle for power," Sergey Peruanskiy said. Further discussion will show whether or not his appeal met with some response among people's deputies.

Political Issues

Yeltsin Appeals to Citizens on Eve of Congress

LD2503172593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1600 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Address by President Boris Yeltsin to Russian citizens; place and date not given—no dateline as received]

[Text] Esteemed fellow citizens!

I find it necessary to meet you on the eve of the Ninth Congress. Russian deputies are assembling for their Congress for the second time this month.

Unfortunately, the more often this happens, the more alarmed Russian citizens become.

I think that most of you, esteemed fellow citizens, are in the know. Our Supreme Soviet deputies regrettably are deviating further and further from the country's vital needs, from the needs of ordinary people.

The laws which are most indispensable for Russia are awaiting their hour. The deputies have no time to examine them. The parliamentarians are drawn into endless political inquiries and searches for enemies.

This is inflicting damage on everyone. This increases even more the anarchy in the country.

This ruinous process must be stopped at any price.

I am taking the necessary measures. I told you about them in my appeal to you on 20 March, esteemed fellow citizens. The government has been given its instructions, and it has already today presented its first recommendations to the president. The majority of bodies of executive authority in the provinces regard my actions with understanding and support. I want to emphasize that all measures to strengthen the authority of executive bodies will be implemented by juridically correct means. The first three decrees have been signed, and more are being

prepared. Against this background, the Constitutional Court's actions are regrettable. It has been very active over the past few days but has not been examining presidential decrees or decisions or any other state documents. What was examined was a verbal appeal by the president and the establishment of a political standpoint. The court was in such a hurry to pass judgment that it did not want to wait until the documents I mentioned were released. Many speeches are being prepared in Russia at quite a high level. I cannot remember any of them being subjected to such urgent and intense study by the court. Nevertheless, I believe that procedures of this kind can only be employed in one instance: If the verbal appeal calls for violently overthrowing the system and for fomenting dissent.

I want to point out that I do not see anything new in today's developments. Certain Supreme Soviet forces are looking for any reason to continue to exacerbate the confrontation. It can be said today quite definitely that one of the scenarios for an overthrow of the president has begun to be realized. They want to do this at the hands of the deputies, behind the backs of the Russian citizens, behind the backs of the electorate. You can see now as before that they only want to tell you about a decision once it has been made.

All this is accompanied by the whipping up of hysteria and cries of conspiracy and coup. Nevertheless, I believe that the proverb "an uneasy conscience betrays itself" is appropriate here. The Supreme Soviet received my message "On Constitutionality" yesterday. I called on our legislators not to restrict themselves to so-called "notorious affairs" of breaches of the constitution, which are no rarity in the Supreme Soviet itself, but to move on to progressive work. I know that new constitutional amendments are being prepared in the Supreme Soviet's depths. It is possible that they will be unexpectedly proposed to the Ninth Congress to again "amend" the constitution to fit the latest schemes of the deputies' leaders.

I say this loud and clear: Such practice has nothing in common with true constitutionality.

Respected Russian citizens!

On the eve of the Congress, I would like to appeal directly to deputies to take a moment to think about why you are assembling.

Most people know the answer.

This is being done to scuttle the nationwide vote of confidence in the president; to remove—directly or indirectly—a president elected by the people; to inject further tension into the relationship between state bodies, at least. All this will only further exacerbate the Russian crisis.

I know that everything will be done to surround the deputies' decisions with a curtain of secrecy and to conceal the personal responsibility of each of you in the haze of a collective decision.

The statesmanlike position of each people's deputy is all the more important.

Remember, if the Congress takes historically wrong decisions, it will cast the people into the abyss of confrontation.

Nevertheless, I believe that they can find within themselves the strength to shed the role of blind extras in political games. I believe that this time you will not allow the people to be deprived of their constitutional right to express their opinion.

I hope the Constitutional Court will rise above political inclinations and finally become a truly independent arbiter.

For my part, I assure you that I am firmly maintaining my position. I have defended and will continue to defend the president's right to ask the people if they have confidence in him and the people's right to confirm such confidence or otherwise.

In conclusion, esteemed viewers, I would like to give heartfelt thanks to everyone who responded to the address with words of support during these difficult days.

Thank you for the fact that even at such a difficult time, our hearts do not grow hard.

Says Congress Could 'Hurl' Nation Into Conflict

OW2503160793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1549 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Boris Yeltsin believes the special 9th Congress of People's Deputies is planning to thwart the national vote of confidence on the president, to directly or indirectly suspend the national election of the head of state. Appearing Thursday evening on national television, he said the Congress may "further tighten the string on relations between state powers." All of this will only aggravate the crisis in Russia, said Yeltsin.

The president thinks powers still exist in the Supreme Soviet who are searching for any reason to further aggravate the conflict. "Today one can definitely say: one of the scenarios of the president's overthrow has begun to be acted out. They want to do this with the hands of the deputies and behind the backs of the citizens of Russia, behind the backs of the voters," he said.

Yeltsin urged each Russian people's deputy to take the "state position." "Remember: if the Congress makes an historically incorrect decision, it will hurl the nation into the depths of conflict," he said.

The president stressed that his measures for fortifying the power of the executive bodies will be conducted in judicially correct ways. He expressed regret at the actions of the Constitution Court, which hurried to examine the president's oral appeal which contained his political platform. The court was in such a hurry to make a decision that it didn't wait for the actual documents to be issued.

As is known, the Constitutional Court declared unconstitutional several of the provisions of Yeltsin's televised appeal to the people on Saturday.

Yeltsin believes that such procedures can be used only if the oral appeal calls for the forcible overthrow of power structures and sows discord.

Yeltsin emphasized that he stands firmly on his positions, and that he has defended and will continue to defend the right of the president to appeal to the citizens of Russia on the issue of confidence and the right of the people to deny or confirm their trust.

Yeltsin Meets With Federation Representatives

LD2503212193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2042 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Moscow, 25 March—Russian President Boris Yeltsin held a meeting in the Kremlin late this evening with the heads of the Russian Federation's constituent republics, chairmen of soviets, heads of administrations, and presidential representatives. Also present at the meeting was a group of people's deputies.

The press service of the president of the Russian Federation reported that the president set out his approach to resolving the political and constitutional crisis. He reaffirmed his intention, based on constitutional law, to conduct on 25 April of this year a referendum on confidence in the president and on a new constitution, thus placing in the hands of the people a solution to the issue of Russia's state structure.

The president explained in his speech that at issue is the draft constitution that was drawn up by the congress's Constitutional Commission and approved in principle at the Sixth Congress of People's Deputies. The president's amendments to the constitution will primarily concern his own powers and relationship with other branches of power. The president stressed that the Federation Treaty should definitely form an integral and inalienable part of the constitution.

Constitutional Court Judge Faults Zorkin Actions

LD2503175593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1139 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow, 25 March—Today, Ernest Ametistov, a member of the Constitutional Court who did not agree with the court's resolution regarding the appeal by Boris Yeltsin to the citizens of Russia, conveyed his particular opinion to the media.

The document, which is over eight pages long, draws attention to a number of significant violations of the law on the Constitutional Court and of the Russian Constitution, which, according to the judge, were committed when this case was examined at the Constitutional Court violated Part Three of Article One of the law on the Constitutional Court, according to which the Constitutional Court does not examine political issues. Incidentally, the president's appeal is a political document.

The judge also notes that on 20-21 March, Valeriy Zorkin, the chairman of the Constitutional Court, gave his assessment of the appeal on television and in the Supreme Soviet three times. However, Part Three of Article 20 of the law on the Constitutional Court prohibits a member of the court from publicly expressing his opinion on an issue under consideration or adopted for consideration by the Constitutional Court anywhere but at a session of the Constitutional Court until the latter adopts a decision on this issue.

Having earlier stated his own position and made categorical assessments of the president's actions and decisions on behalf of the Constitutional Court judges, Valeriy Zorkin "thus expressed his own interest and the interest of the judges on behalf of whom he was speaking in achieving certain results from considering the case," the particular opinion says. In accordance with Part Three of Article 27 of the law on the Constitutional Court, Ernest Ametistov notes, a judge is obliged to withdraw if there could be doubts about his objectivity. However, no withdrawal was made.

Judge Ametistov goes on to note that the Constitutional Court gave its conclusion on the basis of a recording of the president's address and a document presented to the judges as a draft decree "On special rule until the crisis of power is overcome." In doing this, they did not establish the authenticity of both items, the source of the material presented as the draft decree, and other data essential for filing the case in accordance with the rules of jurisprudence.

Following publication of the president's decree "On the functioning of executive bodies until the crisis of power is overcome" of 22 March 1993, it emerged that the material that had been considered by the Constitutional Court as the draft of this act differed not only in the title but also in content from the published decree.

"Thus, the Constitutional Court effectively considered and gave its conclusion to a considerable extent on the basis of a normative act that had not been adopted, which is an infringement of Part Six, Article 32 of the law on the Russian Constitutional Court, which prohibits the court from giving a judgement on actions that are not constitutionally completed."

The particular opinion also notes a number of other violations of the legislation by the Constitutional Court that are significant in the judge's opinion.

Fedetov Thinks Zorkin Should Resign

LD2503165893 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1400 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] You will now hear an opinion about the Constitutional Court of lawyer Mikhail Aleksandrovich Fedotov, the Russian minister for the press and information. Today journalists asked him a great many questions in the Supreme Soviet building. He was also asked if Zorkin could come forward with his appeal on television—an appeal broadcast on television on the night of 20-21 March.

[Begin recording] [Fedetov] I think he could speak, but he could not speak the way he did. As he said, the court had already made a decision. I have a recording of his speech. The chairman of the Constitutional Court does not have the right to say such things. If he expressed his opinion on the matter, he should be removed from participation in the case. His powers should be suspended.

[Unidentified correspondent] Who should remove him?

[Fedotov] By the Constitutional Court. There is no one above him. I believe that the Constitutional Court will reconsider its decision. There are no new circumstances. There are flagrant violations of the law on the Constitutional Court and of the Russian Federation Constitution. Flagrant violations. If I were a member of the Constitutional Court and allowed such violations, I would resign immediately.

An attempt to preserve the situation in the country when people are talking, laws are talking, and there is a war of paper tigers, but cannons keep silent, has been put on the cards. [sentence as heard] But there may be the beginning; we can change over to a new phase. This will be extremely dangerous. On no account should this be allowed. [end recording]

Russian Unity Wants Yeltsin To Step Down

LD2503165093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1615 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Yuriy Philipov]

[Text] Moscow March 25 TASS—"The main aim of the opposition at the 9th Congress of Russian People's Deputies will be to have the president removed from his post for gross violations of the presidential oath, the constitution and law, Vladimir Isakov, one of the leaders of the opposition, said at a session of the Coordinative Council of the Russian Unity bloc on Thursday.

According to Isakov, the opposition assesses the political situation in Russia on the eve of the congress as "a slow coup d'etat."

"This slow coup d'etat can turn into a phase of direct repressions aimed against constitutional bodies of power, public organisations and concrete citizens." The opposition believes there is no other way out but the president's stepping down.

Miners To Strike 1 Apr, To Demand Vote if Yeltsin Ousted

OW2503160993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1550 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia's miners independent trade union will announce an economic strike from April 1, the trade union chairman Aleksandr Sergeev reported to Interfax on Thursday. The strike will be conducted "against the parliament," he said, because the Russian Supreme Sovict failed to present a schedule to consider miners' demands by March 25. The miners trade union demands, in particular, to revise the mechanism of donations, financing, and crediting of the coal producing branch.

The leader of the trade union underlined that in case the Congress of the People's Deputies announces impeachment, the miners intend to force conduction of a referendum on confidence in the congress or Russian President threatening with a political strike.

About 60 mines stopped their work during a 24-hour warning strike, announced by the miners independent trade union on March 1 in the Kuznetsk basin, the Pechora coal basin, and the Rostov province.

Officers' Union Backs Referendum Proposal

OW2503150793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1416 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Officers' Union supports President Yeltsin's proposal to hold a referendum to enable the people in Russia to make their own choice. The Officers' Union leader, Stanislav Terekhov, told journalists at a press conference on Thursday that if the extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies passed a decision to impeach the president, the Officer's Union would insist on holding early presidential elections this summer.

Stanislav Terekhov said the Officers' Union, whose stand is shared by of 70-80% of Russian servicemen, has no confidence in Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy. Rutskoy, he said, is motivated by his quest for power. The Officers' Union leader did say, however, that in his opinion, it would be better if Rutskoy, rather than Yeltsin were in office.

The political crisis in Russia, Mr Terekhov opined, will not split the armed forces on political grounds. The officers will instantly rally around a new leader, whoever would take the lead at the transitional period.

Democratic Reform Movement Urges Early Elections

OW2503150993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1416 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Russian Movement for Democratic Reform is campaigning for early parliamentary and presidential elections, for the convocation of the Constitutional Assembly and for the formation of a coalition government. This movement's proposals on overcoming the power crisis were announced by its leader Gavriil Popov during a press conference on Thursday.

This movement proposes that the Constitutional Assembly should consist of 400 members (50 representatives of the Congress of People's Deputies, 50 - of the president, 100 - of the Russian Federation's constituent entities, 100 - of the political parties and movements, and 100 - of non-political organizations) and that it should be convened in April.

By March 31, the Russian government should be reorganized and about half of the seats in the Cabinet should be offered to representatives of the center and of the national-communist opposition.

Elections to all branches of power should be held no later than the end of September. But if the president receives the people's support during the April referendum, presidential elections might be held a year later.

Gavriil Popov told journalists that the opposition underestimated the political situation. He described Boris Yeltsin as an astute politician "who can easily feel the moods of the majority". "People will not get involved in petty political quarrels, but in a fateful moment they will come to the polling stations and state their opinion," he said.

Gorbachev Calls For Early Elections

LD2503142793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1342 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Ottawa March 25 TASS—Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has called for an early parliamentary and presidential election in Russia. The need for that is prompted by the fact that legislative and executive branches of power in Russia still proceed along the path of confrontation, he said upon arriving in the Canadian city of Calgary at the invitation of a local university, where he will be awarded an honorary degree of doctor of science.

His tour of Canada will continue for a week. Gorbachev will visit Vancouver, Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto and will have private meetings with Canadian Prime-Minister Brian Mulroney and former Premier Pierre Trudeau.

Yeltsin Critics 'Support Him in Every Possible Way'

PM2503162793 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Mar 93 First Edition p 2

[Open letter from members of the "Independent Civil Initiative" Group: "It Is Not For These People To Decide"]

[Text] Since the summer of 1991 we have repeatedly spoken out as independent and truly severe critics of President Yeltsin's political actions. We have proceeded from the premise that it was difficult to evaluate his policy up to then as sufficiently democratic, consistently reformist, or successful. As before, and even more than at that time, we consider it essential that there is a profound change in this policy and in the entire system of power and property relations in Russia.

But it is precisely for this reason that today, at a new and menacing historical boundary, we have no hesitation in rejecting efforts by the last-born sons of the Soviet regime to replace Yeltsin. It is for the citizens of Russia to decide, not them. We will never agree to that kind of reaction by a bogus "representative" power. The response to the attempt to remove Yeltsin should be the broadest peaceful civil disobedience against the Khasbulatov-oriented soviets for the purpose of bringing them down. In anticipation of this turn of events, we forthrightly support the intentions of many miners in Vorkuta and the Kuzbass to begin a political strike.

In the same way we would consider unacceptable and detrimental a repeat of the president's December outbursts, whereby the call for the people's will to be made known becomes the loose change of political trading. Accord in the "upper echelons" is impossible, because the split in their ranks constitutes a clear expression of the crisis of the neo-soviet post-August regime. Another such short-lived "accord" in existing conditions could be only antireformist and antipeople. We hope that this time B. Yeltsin will find within himself the strength to face society seriously and see things through to the bitter end. It is precisely in this and for the sake of this that we are prepared to support him in every possible way.

One way or another, a second wave of the democratic movement cannot be avoided.

[Signed] Members of the "Independent Civic Initiative" Group: Yuriy Afanasyev, Leonid Batkin, Vladimir Bibler, Yuriy Burtin, Kronid Lyubarskiy, Yunna Morits

Yablokov: Impeachment Would Lead to 'Carnage'

PM2503180093 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 26 Mar 93 p 1

[Unattributed report on interview with Aleksey Yablokov, adviser to the Russian president, on 25 March; place not given: "Aleksey Yablokov: 'I Hope a Sense of Responsibility Will Prevail With the Deputies'"]

[Text] In these days and nights intensive work is in progress to define the position of the president and his team at the Congress, Aleksey Yablokov, adviser to the Russian Federation president, stated in an exclusive interview for ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI. The Presidential Council held a session on 25 March, at which the president's report to the Congress was agreed on.

I hope the deputies are responsible enough not to permit impeachment. Otherwise the country will be plunged into bloody carnage. Because neither the miners nor the intelligentsia will consent just like that to the impeachment of a president who was elected by the whole people.

I am in favor of reason and responsibility in making decisions on which the country's fate depends.

Social Welfare Minister Supports Yeltsin

LD2503183593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1141 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Shevel]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Ella Pamfilova, minister for social welfare of the Russian Federation, expressed her full support for President Boris Yeltsin's steps aimed at overcoming the political and constitutional crisis in the country. She spoke at a news conference which she held today at the government's press center.

The minister reported that the Cabinet has drawn up broad measures to protect the most vulnerable groups of the population during the period of economic crisis in the country. However, in her view, it is pointless today to talk about the substance of these measures or about how effective they could be without the crisis in Russia being fundamentally resolved.

In Ella Pamfilova's view, convening an extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies is unlikely to have a positive effect on settling the conflict between the supreme executive and legislative powers. At the same time, the minister believes that the Congress could stabilize the situation in society "if it does not opt for impeaching the president," but rather adopts a decision on holding a referendum at the end of April, as proposed by Boris Yeltsin.

Slams Rutskoy's Role

PM2503200493 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 26 Mar 93 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Ella Pamfilova: 'Don't Play at "Two's Company" '"]

[Text] Ella Pamfilova, Russian minister of social protection, regards the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet decision to convene an extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies as a "fatal mistake." At a press conference Thursday she stated that the decision to convene the deputies' forum could "derail everything that has been done." According to the minister, "the Khasbulatov-Zorkin couple have started playing 'two's company.'" She noted that this has led to a decline in the Constitutional Court's prestige and the professional demise of its leader.

Commenting on Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy's position, E. Pamfilova stated that "his hero's face has turned into a traitor's mask." She expressed the view that the vice president "does not really grasp that he himself is only a means of achieving political goals" and that tomorrow nobody will want him any more.

Ostankino TV Chief Defends Yeltsin

MK2503115693 Moscow ROSSIYA in Russian No. 13, 24-30 Mar 93 p 12

[Interview with Vyacheslav Bragin, chairman of the Ostankino Television Company, by Liliya Lagutina; place and date not given: "I Will Stay With the President to the End"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Lagutina] Is it really true that with your arrival, the state television company will be put to the service of only one [political] viewpoint?

[Bragin] You effectively repeat the words from the farcical "Statement" by one of my former colleagues at the television company. If the "family press" had not blown up this topic, I would not have noticed this departure. I would have signed his application to resign and that would have been that. They are trying to make a mountain out of a molehill. An attempt to create an impression that all the positions in Ostankino have been seized by Democratic Russia members, I believe, has vanished since my first appointments. Anyone who is capable of unbiased assessment could see that I intend to rely primarily on professionals. Valentin Lazutkin has been nominated the company's first deputy chairman; Aleksey Pimenov, director of the Politika studio; and Andrey Razbash, director of the Eksperiment studio.

[Lagutina] You have not answered my question...

[Bragin] Of course, the opposition will have every opportunity to express their opinions on television. Zyuganov, Baburin, and other politicians... As a matter of fact, for the last two Sundays in a row television air time was given to the leaders of the reemerging Communist Party.

Two telecasts that appeared nearly on the same day were devoted to the heroine of communist construction, Sazhi Umalatova. And what about the latest interview with Ruslan Khasbulatov? Isn't it an expression of open opposition to the president? Naturally, the opportunities of this or that party to get air time have to be streamlined, either by some normative act or by a convention or an agreement between various political forces. For us to reflect the whole spectrum of views in the most complete and objective fashion, we put forward a proposal that a public council be set up at the Ostankino Television and Radio Company, which, in our view, should include prominent public figures, writers, artists, diplomats, economists, and representatives of all sectors of society. Another independent council made up of journalists specializing in coverage of television-related problems has already begun its activity.

[Lagutina] Have you already been offered bribes?

[Bragin] Offering me bribes is risky. This is evidently felt by those wishing to do it. Proposals in a veiled form have been made, though.

[Lagutina] What did you come to Ostankino for?

[Bragin] My task as chairman is to unite the company, to create the best conditions for creative work so that each talented person could speak up without hindrance. I want to bring back Russia, her soul, her working people, her wisdom, and her culture to the Ostankino screen.

[Lagutina] What does this mean?

[Bragin] This has many facets. One little grain of the channel's new image is the newborn "Russian World" [Russkiy Mir] telecast which has been created by gifted journalists Aleksey Denisov and Boris Kostenko. The key problem is to cement together, on a new organizational and economic basis, the Ostankino galaxy, which is beset by centrifugal forces, its television center, studios, directorates, and enterprises. Time is urging us on: We need to move fast and prepare the company for entering market relations.

[Lagutina] These are ambitious plans, and not for just a month or even a whole year...

[Bragin] I am perfectly aware of the fact that my stay here may prove ephemeral, that political upheavals may occur. I will immediately lose my job. I view this calmly, philosophically, as the saying goes. But I have been living and working, taking it one day at a time while aiming at the long term. I have a feeling that I will be of use to our staff. And I wish to be of use to the company as a systematic and economically sensible person.

[Lagutina] Do you think Yegor Yakovlev's activity as Ostankino chairman has had positive effects?

[Bragin] It is not my business to judge that.

[Lagutina] What can you say about cases of corruption in Ostankino?

[Bragin] It is too early to talk about it yet.

[Lagutina] What personal relations do you have with the leadership of Russian Television?

[Bragin] I have always been able to reach understanding with Oleg Poptsov. I hope it will continue to remain so.

[Lagutina] Vyacheslav Ivanovich, do you personally think that your appointment as Ostankino chief was in the first instance a political act?

[Bragin] Yes, I think it was. Ensuring an objective line in the activity of the mass media in the current political situation is extremely important, for the body of democratic, honest publications, broadcasts, and telecasts is shrinking fast. Many newspapers have been collared by the right wing and are openly practicing political hooliganism. I respect the president very much for his tolerance of dissent that he has been displaying. It is perfectly clear, however, that, should the opposition come to power, they will not allow any of this, they will at once trample underfoot any dissent.

[Lagutina] Has the president given you any instructions regarding the political line you have to follow as Ostankino chairman?

[Bragin] No. As a matter of fact, I have never been in the president's inner circle. But I have always been and remain his supporter. I managed his election campaign in Tver Oblast. Some time ago I was his representative there. I learned about my appointment from the relevant edict. Frankly speaking, I was about to go back to Tver either to deal with agriculture there or go into the industrial sector. I have a very strong propensity to do this. Knowing Khasbulatov's vindictiveness, I was aware that in the end he would dismiss me from the position of a committee chairman in the Supreme Soviet, and I did not cherish any illusions about that.

[Lagutina] I recall that initially you were on very close terms with Ruslan Imranovich...

[Bragin] Initially I trusted him and was sincerely confident of his democratic views. Khasbulatov is a strong fighter; he is independent, clever, strong-willed, and hard-working, but he is also a master of perfidy, sly, cynical, and unscrupulous. He can play the hypocrite while looking you in the eye. Our speaker does not tolerate any other opinion except his own. With him you can be either obedient or he doesn't want to know you—no other people surround him. I am not afraid to say that at present he is the evil genius, Russia's misfortune. Now it is evident to anyone that Khasbulatov has consistently and deliberately moved toward a conflict with the president in order to establish a regime of his personal authority. He is striving to repeat the experience to which a man with a pipe and moustache [Stalin] has already subjected our country and us.

[Lagutina] Do you think that Khasbulatov can achieve this goal, if he is really pursuing it?

[Bragin] With the connivance of communist groups that are ready to give the country away to anybody. They do not understand that while going to extremes in making advances to Khasbulatov, they will miss the moment when they still have control over him. They need Khasbulatov as long as he is destroying presidential authority and democracy.

[Lagutina] Vyacheslav Ivanovich, still, whatever may be said about Khasbulatov's personal qualities, there is a lot of reasonable things in his proposals about a rational economic policy... For there is no denying that Gaydar's reforms were guilty of risky adventurism...

[Bragin] I can not agree with so harsh an assessment of the Gaydar government. I think that both Yegor Timurovich and many other people were aware that his cabinet was a transitional one. The Gaydar team came along to blow up a monolith. It is impossible to do this gently and prudently, considering all the details. They had to make haste; that is why I too advocated conducting painful reforms but ones which had to be carried out as fast as possible.

[Lagutina] Are you still an active supporter of the Democratic Russia movement?

[Bragin] I continue to treat this movement with great respect. Democratic Russia has brought society forward significantly and has given Russia a number of prominent figures whose activity has been of service to progressive transformations. Unfortunately, at present the well of fresh democratic ideas is depleted, as are personnel resources. Look, the list of new names on the democratic flank is very short. On the right, on the contrary, there are more and more young and gifted people. The democratic circle around the president has not been renewed.

[Lagutina] What is your personal point of view: Has Boris Yeltsin made a lot of mistakes during his presidency?

[Bragin] Alas, philistines and pedestrian politicians are always angry, and at present there is little understanding of what burden is carried by the president and in what period of history he happens to head the state. They say that he is inconsistent and prone to other people's influences, but they are not even aware of the extent of his responsibility. Especially, when he has such a Supreme Soviet at his side and a speaker who constantly puts spokes in his wheels! Now, when it is fashionable to criticize the president, I have been trying to explain his line and do not want now to speak as an expert discussing his mistakes. I am convinced that his position is correct and I do not know a single person who could prove to me that he is wrong. I will stay with the president to the end.

[Lagutina] Have you ever felt ashamed in your life?

[Bragin] I am by no means an ideal person. For example, when I was young, I was an enthusiastic, orthodox individual; in short, a provincial Communist Party Alexander the Great. And I believed in Khrushchev's phrase: "The party solemnly proclaims that the current generation of the Soviet people will live under Communism." As secretary of a factory party committee, I painted it in red on a long wall near the entrance. Whatever they used to bleach or paint over those letters after my departure, they are still visible and show through the whitewash. Last year I was on my home territory and found the traces of my old agitation campaign. There has been a lot of things in my life for which I feel ashamed, but I have always tried not to be mean to people.

[Lagutina] You seem to be constant not only in your political views; can one also rely on you in friendship?

[Bragin] Yes, I think so. I have good, dependable friends. I like people in general. It often happens that you are riding on the escalator in the subway and a line of people is moving in the opposite direction, and all of a sudden you see an unfamiliar person with whom you personally feel some affinity. You intuitively understand that this person could have become your friend... But it is impossible to catch up with him now....

Abdulatipov, Others Oppose 'Leader-Dominated Democracy'

LD2503221793 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2000 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By correspondent M.Sarbaa; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The Moskva public press center hosted representatives of the Supreme Soviet today—Abdulatipov, Korovnikov, Ispravnikov, and Vladislavlev. On the eve of the Congress they expressed, of their own accord, a wish to tell foreign journalists about the sociopolitical situation in the country, as the press release puts it, and to declare their dedication to the policy of market reform aimed at creating a new system of economic relations and further democratization of society.

However, they told the audience that they did not connect all those things with President Yeltsin. The true meaning of the press conference became clear when Abdulatipov took the floor:

[Begin Abdulatipov recording] The democracy we have in Russia today is nothing but a leader-dominated democracy [vozhdistskaya demokratiya]. This is a type of democracy typical of transitional stages in societies dating back to feudalism. [end recording]

He said that there is no conflict between branches of power but there is a conflict with the current constitution. No specific answers were given to journalists' questions about the Congress. In particular, replying to the question: What will you vote for?, he said: I cannot tell you; there will be a secret ballot.

Filatov, Shumeyko Address Pro-Yeltsin Meeting

PM2503110393 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 24 Mar 93 p 2

[Roza Sergaziyeva and Lyubov Tsukanova report under the general heading "Democratic Russia Musters Its Forces"]

[Text] Representatives of Russia's democratic organizations have gathered in Moscow to support the president in his battle to continue radical reform. There was not a place to be had in the capital's "Oktyabr" movie theater—just as was the case in 1991 at the election meeting held by presidential hopeful Boris Yeltsin. People were listening to relays of the speeches in the foyer, the lobby, and on the stairs. Once again, at a decisive moment for the fate of the country, when democratic transformations are hanging by a thread, people holding different views but sharing common democratic convictions are coming together—and this is the only chance, as all the speakers stressed, of keeping the country from sliding into communist totalitarianism.

"The president's position occupies the high ground and is morally pure," Sergey Filatov, head of the president's administration, said. The inappropriate and hasty response to Boris Yeltsin's television address was said by S. Filatov to show the readiness of the Supreme Soviet and the Constitutional Court for other action that went beyond the Constitution. The president had proposed edicts to strengthen executive organs and protect the mass media, as well as a nationwide vote of confidence in him as the top state official, who has shouldered responsibility for implementing radical economic and political reform. The best way to support the president in the current critical situation is to prepare for the 25 April vote and stage it in a well-organized way.

The president has repeatedly talked of the possibility of a return to the communist past, Vice Premier Vladimir Shumeyko, chairman of the government commission for holding the referendum, recalled. The Supreme Soviet denies this, but how else can one assess the fact that last Sunday new defenders of parliament pulled down the Russian tricolor from the "White House" balcony where President Yeltsin had spoken 21 August 1991? The president is defending the unshakable foundations of the constitutional system—people's power, federalism, the separation of powers, and the republican form of rule. And he, unlike Khasbulatov and Zorkin who head collegial organs and can always hide behind their will, has neither the right nor the opportunity to avoid personal responsibility. The questions of confidence and the people's support for basic constitutional principles are placed side by side because there is no other legal way out of the profound crisis of power. There are even legitimate grounds for holding a nationwide vote in the event of the referendum being banned by the Congress. These grounds are to be found in the laws on the election of the Russian Federation president and on referendums. In order to ensure the purity of the procedure it is necessary to involve the international public and UN observers. There will be no violations, V. Shumeyko stressed.

In the period that has passed since August 1991 a great deal of mistakes have been made and many opportunities lost, said speakers Rear Admiral (Retired) Usov, the actor Khazanov, and the lawyer Makarov. But a democratic Russia has a chance of winning if it fully appreciates the looming danger and does everything to shake people out of their apathy and lack of confidence in their own resources. Saturday evening, Gennadiy Burbulis said, saw the end of the question of who would not share power with whom, and the formulation of the "only correct conclusion"—policy in Russia is made by the Russian people, they are now the main force. There will be no period more difficult than the coming month, and Russian democracy must not lose.

The meeting of Russian citizens adopted an appeal to citizens of Russia to support the popularly elected president and the people's right to directly express their will themselves. A public fund for support for the referendum was set up.

The meeting, which was initially meant to be purely a Moscow meeting, became truly a Russian meeting. Delegations from different parts of the country were present in the auditorium. And, typically, the democrats who had disintegrated after August 1991 are starting to consolidate once again. Have they at last really understood that they had no reason to split in the first place?

And one other point. Straight after Boris Yeltsin's address to the people, various Russian cities started setting up or reviving committees of support for him. I have spoken to two chairmen of these committees.

Patriarch Appeals for Compromise, Calm

LD2503234693 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 25 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] The voice of the church has always played an important role during difficult times in Russia. Today Aleksey II, patriarch of Moscow and All-Russia, made an appeal to citizens of Russia. The recording was made especially for our program.

[Begin recording] Dear Russians, esteemed people's deputies, members of the government, brothers and sisters! In these fateful days I am making a heartfelt appeal to all of you to do everything to prevent the country from being returned to chaos, ruin, and civil war. A compromise must be found. People must be given the chance to survive in these difficult days. The Holy Synod, comprising bishops from Russian eparchies, has addressed the people of Russia, the citizens of our country, with a message which I would like to remind you of.

With all the force of our pastoral voice, we say to the rulers: Stop! If the country falls into the abyss, every one of you will be answerable before God and before history. Now you must renounce your ambitions and overcome yourselves. The people need an authority with the power to adopt laws and ensure their effect. They need rulers capable of protecting them from anarchy and arbitrariness, and the country from falling apart. We need a state which will not allow a return to the past, to dictatorship, to the suppression of the liberty of the individual and the liberty of the people. We need a form of state administration which could permit a quick solution to key issues concerning the future life of a renewed Russia.

In particular I appeal to the army. We greet the position of nonparticipation in the political confrontation that it has taken up. This position is the only one which is acceptable today, and we ask our warriors to retain their wisdom, not to be susceptible to the influence of political extremists, and to preserve the lives and dignity of the citizens of the country. A compromise must be found between the powers in order to preserve the country. If no compromise is found, this could lead to the most dangerous consequences for Russia. Blood could be spilled and civil war could begin. I call on you all to find a compromise.

I think that by holding a vote the president has suggested that you express confidence or no confidence in him a second time. This is the only way: election of a new parliament and election of the president. This is the way of compromise, which will allow the country to be led out of the crisis which it finds itself in today. [end recording]

Independent Unions Want Early Elections

LD2503232693 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1550 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Shevel]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Russia's political crisis "can only be solved by holding immediate re-elections of the president and the people's deputies of the Russian Federation," says the Presidium of the Council of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia [FITUR], which today circulated a message to the Congress of People's Deputies. The Congress is invited to pass such a resolution "having determined in a constitutional resolution the procedure for electing the federal legislative body."

The Presidium of the FITUR Council proposes forming a government of popular confidence "by consultations between the main sociopolitical forces, including the trade unions." That government, in the view of the union leaders, would, together with the subjects of the Federation, draw up general norms organizing the life of society in the transitional period.

The message to the Congress says that pending the elections and the passing of a new Constitution, all bodies of legislative, executive, and judicial power must act under the supervision of the Constitutional Court within the framework laid down by the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

Stock Exchange Chairman Supports Yeltsin

LD2603061893 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0525 GMT 26 Mar 93

[From the "Time for Business People" program]

[Text] In an hour or so, yet another extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies will be held in the Kremlin. A word from our entrepreneurs.

[Begin recording of Konstantin Borovoy, chairman of the Russian stock exchange] Of course, entrepreneurs are interested in a peaceful development of the situation, and not just entrepreneurs, but all citizens of Russia. Life is very hard today. We have to survive. We have inherited an awful economy, a country in an awful state, but if the deputies do not appreciate this and if they try to resist the people and their president, they should know that they will no longer have a place in our life. Whereas today we are prepared to reach a compromise and will agree to a peaceful solution of this conflict, nevertheless, after a certain period of time we simply will not have an opportunity to do so. Then, just as we did on 19 August, we will take every necessary measure to protect ourselves and our people from these deputies. I think that—as on 19 August—all banks and exchanges will stop work and all commercial shops and little kiosks will close. They will understand that they are not the main force in this country. The main force in this country are the people and their president. We have our powers. We do not wish to use them, but if required we will be able to protect ourselves. [end recording]

Poll Shows Yeltsin Favored Over Khasbulatov

OW2603082593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0808 GMT 26 Mar 93

[From "Viewpoint Number 10"; materials prepared by the Public Opinion Foundation—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text]

BORIS YELTSIN OR RUSLAN KHASBULATOV?

At the end of February, three weeks before the now-famous appeal of the President of the Russian Federation to the people, a poll was conducted to compare the popularity of Boris Yeltsin with that of the chairman of parliament, Ruslan Khasbulatov. A total of 1,032 citizens of Russia were polled.

Thirty-five percent of those polled favored the president, while only 12% were in favor of Khasbulatov, and the other 53% of Russians said they did not like either one.

Commentary From the Public Opinion Foundation:

Most often for the ordinary citizens of Russia the aggravating conflict between the various branches of power is seen as a personal confrontation between the president and the speaker of parliament. It may well be said that the personification of the political conflict is a rather typical feature of the mass opinion among Russians. And it is quite natural that one can judge about their attitude toward legislative or presidential structures of power through the mass opinions on such personalities as Yeltsin and Khasbulatov.

However, the poll results are interesting not only because of the way sympathies towards these two politicians are expressed. And the totals in the questionnaire answers showing that Yeltsin enjoys three times as much support among the public as Khasbulatov does. However, much more important seems to be the fact that 53% of those polled do not find either side attractive.

Quite meaningful, in our opinion, is one more result of the polling. As is known, in confrontation between the politics of the Supreme Soviet and those of the executive branch headed by the president is one of the main theses—the necessity of "social adjustments" in the economic reform course thus to protect the "socially weak" strata of the population from the burden of market changes. However, the level of support given to Khasbulatov by this very category of Russians is the lowest: only 4% among the unemployed and 8% among pensioners.

Paper Details Support for Referendum, Congress

MK2503140093 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 25 Mar 93 p 9

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] In the following table, A represents support for Yeltsin's proposal for holding a referendum, B represents support for the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet, C represents a neutral stance and a call for compromise, and D represents the position of Kuzbass miners who reserved the right "to take measures more decisive than a strike."

Reaction of Regions to the Crisis of Power in Russia

Region	soviets	executive branch
Moscow	B	A
St. Petersburg	C	A
Tatarstan	C	C
Kemerovo	B	D and A
Barnaul	A	A
Irkutsk	B	B
Novgorod	A	A
Arkhangelsk	A	A
Voronezh	B	—
Yaroslavl	A	—
North Ossetia	C	C
Buryatia	C	C
Kabardino-Balkaria	C	C

Stances taken by Constitutional Court members on the question of the president's address to the citizens of Russia

Name and Position	How he/she voted on the question of declaring the president's address unconstitutional	Faction or organization that nominated the judge at the Fifth Congress of People's Deputies
Valeriy Zorkin, court chairman	yes	Communists for Democracy
Yuriy Rudkin, court secretary	yes	Russia
Nikolay Vedernikov, judge	yes	Russia
Viktor Luchin, judge	yes	Communists of Russia
Oleg Tiunov, judge	yes	Communists of Russia
Boris Ebzeyev, judge	yes	autonomous entities
Gadis Gadzhiyev, judge	yes	autonomous entities
Vladimir Oleynik, judge	yes	Supreme Soviet Freedom of Conscience Committee
Nikolay Seleznev, judge	yes	RSFSR Procurator's Office
Nikolay Vitruk, deputy court chairman	special opinion	New Generation "Smena"
Ernest Ametistov, judge	special opinion	United Faction
Tamara Morshchakova, judge	special opinion	without party affiliation
Anatoliy Kononov, judge	did not vote because of illness	Supreme Soviet Human Rights Committee

Meetings of Yeltsin's Supporters, Opponents in Moscow

LD2603090393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0854 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oled Velichko]

[Text] Moscow March 26 TASS—Parliament members, heading for the Great Kremlin Palace to attend the 9th Congress of People's Deputies of Russia, had to walk through two large crowds of demonstrators—representatives from democratic parties and movements, on the one hand, and from "patriotic" and communist organisations—on the other.

The Public Committee of Democratic Organisations has called on the MPs to back the nationally-elected president and to oppose the "usurption of power by the

Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet". The democrats urged the Russian people to take an active part in the April referendum, to support Boris Yeltsin, and to say "yes" to the new Russian Constitution.

The communist leaders, for the umpteenth time, called for the president's resignation.

Yavlinskiy Suggests Elections 'Within a Year'

LD2603110093 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0916 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Yuriy Sizov]

[Text] Moscow, 26 Mar—The holding of early elections within a year could be a democratic way out of Russia's constitutional crisis, the well-known economist Grigoriy Yavlinskiy believes. In a conversation with journalists in the corridors of the Congress of People's Deputies, he stressed that if the president becomes the guarantor of such a process, the conflict between the powers will be overcome.

In Grigoriy Yavlinskiy's opinion, the process connected with early elections is "a crystallization of political parties, the separation of new political currents, the emergence of alternative figures and programs, and debate in society".

"The elections will see a change in bodies of power, and we will no longer have to assemble about 1,000 people in order to discuss important questions," the economist said.

Speaking about a time scale for early elections, Grigoriy Yavlinskiy stressed that the best time would be within a year. "But this should not happen tomorrow," he stressed. "That would be farcical".

A referendum, in Grigoriy Yavlinskiy's opinion, is "a rather dangerous thing." No one can deprive the president of the right to ask the people if they have confidence in him, the economist said. But it would be a very bad thing if, as a result of a referendum, we were to lose the president. "I would not want that," Grigoriy Yavlinskiy concluded.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI Urges Parliamentary 'Prudence'

PM2603104393 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 26 Mar 93 p 1

[Lyubov Tsukanova report: "Prudence Is the Last Chance"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] It is quite clear that it will be hard for the Congress, which has met to "provide a fundamental solution to the problem" (the words used by the head of parliament) to prove equal to the responsibility and find a solution to the crisis situation worthy of the great country. Resolving objective problems at the level of personalities is the prerogative of immature public consciousness. What is more, that path may have unpredictable consequences. Therefore, if deputies are indeed concerned for the future of the country, they must act in an extremely circumspect and cautious manner. The timing mechanism of revenge has been wound and everyone is now aware that there are forces in society willing to take advantage of the crisis of power. The people's representatives may still have a last chance today of stopping this fatal timepiece.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA Criticizes Yeltsin

PM2603102193 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 93 First Edition p 3

[Parliamentary observer Aleksey Vorobyev article under the rubric "We Comment on the President's Edicts": "The People Must Look Them in the Eye and Swear Allegiance"]

[Text] And so the president has graced his fellow citizens with yet another edict on the activity of the executive organs with a view to overcoming the power crisis. And during the next few days society is fated to try to make sense of two desperate alternatives.

First and foremost arguments will break out over how and when this document which has caused such a fuss was born. Either the text presented to parliamentarians was drawn up as it says 20 March, and the television presentation that same day of a document which is very similar in ideas is a cunning political move aimed at provoking opponents into hasty action, thereby unmasking them in the eyes of the people as enemies of democracy and reforms who are dying to seize power.

Or else in his television address B. Yeltsin actually told the people the truth about the edict he had signed, and during the next few days the presidential team rewrote the document at the cost of feverish mental effort, placing somewhat less offensive contents between the threatening covers.

Clearly, the first option will be chosen by those who still, despite everything, retain a high opinion of the intellectual abilities of the president's entourage.

The other alternative is connected with an assessment of the results of Boris Yeltsin's action and involves an explanation of the question of whether he has beaten the deputies with a cunning move or whether he has suffered a defeat.

Let us permit ourselves to express the opinion that on this occasion the Russian president has unfortunately suffered a major strategic defeat, whatever the basis for his current showdowns with the legislators and the Constitutional Court.

This conclusion is linked neither with a juridical interpretation of the situation nor with an analysis of the

purely political results of the president's maneuvers. The fact is that at the height of the struggle for the leadership of this great power, the plain truth that people in Russia have always measured their leaders [vozhdi] against a primarily moral yardstick seems somehow to have been lost. And in this respect, it seems, the president's position has been seriously undermined.

The Russian people have always acted indulgently toward Boris Yeltsin. They have calmly accepted some of his human weaknesses, his games with Gorbachev during the perestroyka era, his requests for political rehabilitation on the CPSU Olympus, and even the numerous times when "...the president has been left in a vulnerable position."

Having become Russian president, Boris Yeltsin did not fulfill a single promise he had made to the people. Not one! The privileges of the highest officials were not eliminated and the hastily cobbled-together CIS collapsed, although its citizens were assured that the union would be a durable one. Instead of curbs, crime has been given a free hand. Solemn promises that significant price hikes would not be permitted have turned out to be hot air, as have promises that the reforms would in no way be implemented at the expense of the impoverishment of the Russian people. There is no point even mentioning the time frame for stabilizing the economy which is constantly postponed from one season to the next.

Half as much as this would be enough for the citizens of any other country to withdraw their confidence in their head of state. But the nature of Russians is so varied that even when their leader has led them into a deep and impassable morass, they continue to link him with their hopes for something better. Rallies during the last few days have shown that some people in Russia still believe Yeltsin.

However, the collision with these two ill-starred edicts, it seems, is abruptly changing the nature of the relations between the president and society. After all, Yeltsin's television address last Saturday brought the country to the brink of schism and civil war and provoked some components of the Federation to make sharp separatist declarations.

On Wednesday the same people were informed that the alarm had been canceled, that it was a false alarm and, it seems, there was never any question of any special measures. That is to say, the citizens of this great power were simply being used as cards in some sort of political poker game, a game of chance in which the ability to bluff is particularly valued.

But what if this extremely acute political confrontation had not simply been limited to power structures being paralyzed by waves of rallies and some minor injuries? What if it had resulted in bloodshed? What if the presidential poker game had acquired a bloody tinge?

Can such games with the fate of an enormous country and millions of its citizens be justified by a higher expediency? Do such actions conform to even the mildest and most broadly interpreted moral principles? Anyone who answers this question in the affirmative removes the blame not just from Boris Yeltsin. He would also seem to be justifying the players in the shameful SCSE [State Committee for the State of Emergency] who played the same poker game using absolutely identical rules. And that game too lasted for 72 hours. The only difference is that during the SCSE period people actually died. This time round this was avoided!...

In these feverish March days, it seems, the presidential power has suffered a moral disaster. Enthusiasm for that pernicious maxim "the end justifies the means" has always led to this result. The immorality of the situation is only emphasized by the president's desire, clearly expressed in the new edict, to find out whether Russians have confidence in him.

Having plunged a huge people into an alarming and fatally dangerous delusion for three days, they [the president's side] are now looking the people straight in the eye and demanding a vote of allegiance. Well then, all the Kremlin's conscience problems seem to have been solved already....

Yeltsin Changes Composition of Council of Ministers

LD2603083793 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0814 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow, 26 Mar—Boris Yeltsin has signed a series of decrees on changes in the composition of the Russian Council of Ministers. On a representation of the prime minister, Finance Minister Vasiliy Barchuk has been released from office "in connection with his transfer to other work." Boris Fedorov, deputy chairman of the government, has been appointed minister of finance.

By decree of the president, Boris Saltykov has been released from the post of deputy prime minister. He has been appointed head of the Ministry of Science and Technical Policy, which was created as a result of the transformation of the Ministry of Science, Higher Education, and Technical Policy of the Russian Federation.

The corresponding decrees were signed on 25 March. ITAR-TASS correspondents were informed of this by sources in the Russian Government.

Shumeyko: Coalition Government 'Not an Issue'

LD2603131793 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1201 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Sergey Podyapolskiy]

[Text] Moscow, 26 Mar—"The formation of a coalition government is not an issue at the moment", said

Vladimir Shumeyko, Russian Federation first vice prime minister, when asked by journalists to comment on the passage in today's speech by Boris Yeltsin in which he said he was prepared to bring fresh forces into the government.

Shumeyko stressed that—with the introduction of adjustments to economic policy and the transfer of the burden of reform to the regions—"it is not so much changes in the cabinet that are needed, as the addition of new detachments."

The first vice prime minister described as "routine" yesterday's government changes, in which the minister of finance, the minister of economics, and a vice prime minister lost their portfolios. Refusing to comment on the reasons for the reshuffle, Shumeyko said that the question of a new minister of economics had not yet been decided.

Rumor of Rutskoy's Staff Moving To White House Denied

PM2603104593 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 26 Mar 93 p 2

[Sergey Ovsiyenko report under the "Rumors" rubric: "Is Rutskoy Moving to the White House?"]

[Text] Rumors began to fly around Moscow yesterday which, as I saw for myself, are far harder to refute than to confirm. One of them was that the vice president's apparatus is moving from the Kremlin to the White House.

The Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Press Center replied that nothing is known about the vice president's movements, but they do know that there has been no authorization for deputies arriving for the Ninth Congress to register in the Kremlin. Registration has therefore been organized at the White House. The reason being the sluggishness of rank-and-file Grand Kremlin Palace personnel, who have not yet recovered from the previous forum of people's representatives.

Only Valeriy Krasnov, head of the vice president's secretariat, was able to refute the rumor, saying that this is "utter rubbish."

Defense Ministry Appeals to Army for Restraint

PM2503190693 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 26 Mar 93 p 1

["Appeal by the Russian Defense Ministry Collegium to Russian Armed Forces Personnel"; place and date not given]

[Text] Servicemen of the Russian Army! The Defense Ministry Collegium appeals to you in light of the complex political situation in the country. Various political forces, for the attainment of their own ends, have unleashed a battle for influence over the Army, which as of today remains one of the guarantors of stability in Russia. Efforts to split the Army, to single out the officers' corps and drag it into the political struggle, and to provoke the military into forcible actions are not abating. All of this is fraught with the risk of the most serious consequences up to and including the collapse of Russia's statehood and territorial integrity and, what is most horrifying, bloodshed.

In these conditions, the Army is acting and will act in line with the Russian Constitution and laws. The Armed Forces leadership considers it unacceptable to drag the Army into political rivalries.

Commanders at all levels should step up work to explain the legislation regulating Armed Forces activity, and above all the Law "On Defense," which bans any political campaigning in the Armed Forces and the creation within the Armed Forces of social and other organizations pursuing political aims.

Every serviceman should all necessary measures to maintain troop discipline and order within units and on ships, the requisite level of combat readi ess of troops and naval forces, and reliable troop management.

The collegium expresses confidence that Russian Armed Forces personnel will remain faithful to their military duty; show restraint, calm, and self-discipline; and do everything possible to preserve civil peace and accord in society.

Russian Army Repeats Pledge of Non-Interference

PM2503173093 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 26 Mar 93 p 1

["The Army Must Have Secure Immunity to Political Stresses"]

[Text] Our editorial office has been receiving frequent telephone calls in recent days from foreign journalists and many Russian colleagues of ours from civilian publications, all asking that same questions: "What about the Army? What do military men think about the power conflict? Whom do they support? Which way are they leaning?" We repeat for the 100th time: The troops are busy with their day-to-day affairs; different people have different views, but they have no intention of interfering in the political confrontation. This usually does not satisfy the inquirers for some reason: "Yes, but all the same, suppose it comes to the crunch, to bloodshed, to concrete orders. How will the military behave?"

First, we would like to say: Why should things reach extremes when there is every opportunity to emerge from the crisis through normal, civilized means? Second: Although a fierce and sometimes apparently intransigent fight is in progress on the political Olympus, there is very real consensus on at least one point (which may be the most important), namely that both the presidential side and the legislators have officially stated that the Armed

Forces cannot be used for political purposes and cannot be a factor in the present standoff under any circumstance.

One hopes that politicians will have the common sense not to make any fatal decisions contrary to those statements.

However, their common sense is not the only hope. There is now another factor of no small importance, namely the position and mood of the Army itself. It has learned a lot in recent years. It has been let down and betrayed so many times. There was Afghanistan, Tbilisi, Vilnius, and the August 1991 putsch. Of course, the bitter experience gained in the mills of those tragedies was not wasted. If there should be any political forces or leaders who, even in theory, would permit the use of military force in resolving domestic political problems, they will have to reckon with that.

The Army's resistance to political stresses and its immunity to being drawn into political standoffs are an important condition of a stable democracy, a highly necessary trait of a civilized society. Take Western countries. Is it possible to imagine that somewhere in, say, the United States or France there are people who, in the course of a domestic political struggle, would venture to pin their hopes on an appeal to the armed forces? This is simply excluded from the category of permissible political means. It is excluded by the very traditions and ethos of democracy and by the army's position in society, as well as by specific legal norms.

Nowadays the Russian serviceman is also to some extent protected against being caught in a political "vice." The law on defense, as is well known, stipulates a whole series of provisions to that effect. One very important norm, for instance, is the one that bans any political campaigning on the territory of military units.

At the same time recent events are food for thought as to whether these legal norms may need further development and consolidation. It is plain to see how dangerous any machinations around the Army or any speculative exploitation of Army problems can be. Antiarmy actions, rallies, pseudo-officers'-assemblies, provocative appeals, newspaper items... Alas, there is no shortage of this today. The simple truth is clear. It is, of course, a very bad thing when there is no consensus in the top echelons of power. It is a bad thing when the struggle between parties, groups, and individuals takes on an excessively tough form. It is a bad thing when rallying mobs supporting opposite poles spill onto the streets. But all this does not amount to civil war. Civil war begins when the split causes a crack right through the military collectives. When mutiny grips the Army's ranks. When people with weapons stand on opposite sides of the barricades. When the first shots are fired and the first blood is spilled...

Today—and this is extremely important—there is no split in the Army collectives. Safeguarding the Army against this and sparing military people the need to guess political riddles is now a vitally important task for the whole of society, for all sound forces, which, despite their various stances, are united in their unwillingness to see new upheavals for Russia.

Of course, a serviceman, like any other citizen, is entitled to his view of what is happening in the country, to his sympathies and antipathies. But this should not influence his service, his fulfillment of his constitutional duty to defend the Fatherland, and the unity of the ranks.

Let us note, incidentally, that those who think the Armed Forces are still some kind of bulwark of conservatism are mistaken. It is not true. Many sociological studies confirm that the vast majority of military people are in favor of the reforms, of changes. They certainly do not want a return to the past, to the days of the GlavPUR [Soviet Army and Navy Main Political Directorate] and socialist competition, to the past from which many of the Army's present problems derive—such as the gross shortage of housing. What the military want is certainty, social guarantees, stability, and order in society and the Army. But order based on law, not the bayonet.

Whom will the Army follow, whom does it support? If we want a normal, stable society this question should not be posed at all. And there is no need for endless tests of commitment, of loyalty. There are far more acceptable options. They are in the air, they are constantly discussed in the current political debates. If other solutions to the crisis do not work, a referendum or new elections would certainly be better. Make up your minds, esteemed politicians. Reach agreement, at long last, as to which of these means is to be used, how, and when. Only ask honest questions without "hidden meanings," create a normal atmosphere in society. And every military man will vote for whatever is in accordance with his views, convictions, and stance. Like any other citizen. Like the whole people. Like the whole of Russia.

Military Union Leaders Confirm Army's Neutrality

LD2503203393 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1850 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vadim Byrkin]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar—The leaders of the union "Shchit," of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Servicemen's Union, and of the Independent Association of Military Experts confirmed today at a news conference in Moscow that Russia's Army is neutral and outside politics. They condemned the action of the "Officers' Union," which, they said, has a pro-communist orientation and has been sending emissaries to the troops to agitate against the president of Russia".

Together with declarations of the neutrality of the Army, they said, quoting their own sources, that the majority of officers support Boris Yeltsin, the supreme commander-in-chief of Russia's Armed Forces, and Army General Pavel Grachev, the defense minister, since they stand for

stability in society. Despite the fact that the organizations headed by them are in opposition to the present leadership of the Defense Ministry, they supported its actions to avert army interference in the political life of the country.

No Troop Movements Planned in Moscow Oblast

LD2603104793 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0937 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, 26 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—"No exercises or troop movements in Moscow Oblast are planned for the near future," stated Major General V. Chirvin, head of the Russian Federation Defense Ministry press center, in an interview for the ARGUMENTY I FAKTY weekly. ARGUMENTY I FAKTY recalls that the Taman and Kantemir divisions, as well as several smaller military units, are at the moment deployed outside Moscow.

"There is no question, either, the general said, of introducing joint patrolling which, incidentally, can be introduced only on a decision of the Russian Supreme Soviet". "Generally speaking, according to Article 10 of the Law on Defense, the bringing in of units, subunits, and other formations of the armed forces and the fulfillment of tasks unconnected with their designation may be permitted only on the basis of law or according to a decision of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet," he stressed.

"According to most responsible officials of the Defense Ministry press center, ARGUMENTY I FAKTY writes, the Army is fully prepared to maintain neutrality in the situation and not to take one side or the other. However, many are worried by the "subversive" activities of such military politicians as Lieutenant Colonel S. Terekhov, the founder of the Officers Union, who on more than one occasion has recently urged the Army "to finally take power in the country into its own hands."

Local Reactions to Leadership Crisis Summarized

PM2603122193 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 24 Mar 93 First Edition pp 1,3

[Feature comprising reports by own correspondents Vyacheslav Stepanov in Yakutsk, Oleg Zlobin in Saratov, Aleksandr Yermakov in Kuzbass, Nikolay Bulavintsev in Penza, Anatoliy Usoltsev in Chelyabinsk, Andrey Shishov in Nizhniy Novgorod, Sergey Ponomarev in Khabarovsk, Vladimir Yefimov in Tyumen, Margarita Ziangirova in Omsk, and Viktor Chemodurov in Kursk: "What Russia Thinks"]

[Text] **Yakutsk: Nothing Untoward**

The Supreme Soviet presidium and government of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) have adopted an appeal to the people of the northern region. It says that the intensification of confrontation in the top echelon of state power has assumed extremly destructive forms. This is posing a threat to the life of society in general.

But thanks to the northerners' good sense, the sociopolitical situation remains stable in the republic. The president, parliament, and government are taking every step to ensure that peace and harmony are preserved and consistently strengthened. The Republic of Sakha Supreme Soviet session will start work on 23 March, as planned.

The appeal calls on inhabitants, labor collectives, officials, political parties, and public movements in the republic to observe the constitutional rule of law and citizens' rights and continue creative work on the socioeconomic development of the republic.

For my part I would say that it is no bad thing that, according to republic security and internal affairs ministries' data, there were no rallies, strikes or other untoward events connected with the exacerbation of the political situation in the country either on Sunday [21 March] or by the end of Monday.

Saratov: No Getting Away From Politics

There is no getting away from politics these days: Nikolay Makarevich, chairman of Saratov Oblast Soviet, addressed the people of the Volga area early Monday morning, anticipating local radio broadcasts. He described the Russian president's actions as an unconstitutional step, an attempted coup d'etat. These actions, he stressed, only express the interests of the stallholders, people making money on the side, officials who have gotten out of hand, and the wild ones among the people who have gotten caught up in the quest for a way out of the crisis.

The danger is, the chairman of the local parliament continued, that all this is being presented under the auspices of reforms and transformations. People are lost—what side do we take? It has gotten to the point where husband and wife are on different sides of the political barricades.

Saratov Garrison chief and Oblast Military Commander V. Farfilov made it plain that the military will keep out of the confrontation between the political forces.

The oblast Soviet deputies will gather for a session in the very near future in the city on the Volga. Incidentally, a report by Governor Yuriy Belykh on the socioeconomic situation in the oblast and the prospects for its stabilization was named as the main item long before the current events.

A number of people's deputies asked for a relay of the session on local radio and fuller coverage on television. In turn, Yu. Belykh warned that the administration chief's report would be made together with an analysis of the deputies' implementation of voters' mandates. So it promises to be a major discussion.

Kuzbass: Calm

The president's appeal was relatively calmly received in the Kuzbass. All political forces and currents in the oblast confirmed their previous positions.

For instance, Aman Tuleyev, chairman of the oblast Soviet, made an appeal to his compatriots on local radio on Monday morning to make their choice. His personal stance is well known: Yeltsin is leading the country and people to rack and ruin and it is high time he and his entourage made room for someone else. The president's appeal to the people is intended to eliminate the forces opposing him.

Oblast administration chief Mikhail Kislyuk held a press conference that day. Although the main question at it was that of preparation for sowing and other spring matters. But, naturally, the governor could not avoid giving an assessment of the present situation. "Do not panic," was what his statement boiled down to. At the same time, the governor was surprised by Constitutional Court Chairman V. Zorkin's stance. Why should he decide whether the two branches of authority "come together or go their separate ways"? A judge, particularly one of that rank, should be particularly impartial and not be politically active at all.

M. Kislyuk noted that all the oblast's "power" structures are prepared to observe the Constitution and the laws unswervingly. The inner Soviet voted to hold the referendum on 25 April.

In short, Mikhail Borisovich occupies a centrist position (although he makes no secret of the fact that he is on the president's side), but the same cannot be said of the left wing—workers committees and independent miners' trade unions. They are expecting further resolute steps from B. Yeltsin. Vyacheslav Golikov, chairman of the council of workers committees, is not sure the president has the heart to continue the struggle. That is when the strike quesiton will be decided. In the meantime, although it is planned for 1 April (depending on the course of the miners' talks with the government), neither the leaders nor the workers' collectives are on strike red alert.

Penza: It Is Like an Operation Without Anesthetic

That was Penza entrepreneur I. Belotelov's view of the Russian president's appeal:

"People do not want confrontation and conflicts. Everyone is pretty sick of politicians' fights and squabbles. What we need is something quite different—the opportunity to do some proper work and get properly paid for it."

Here is the opinion of "Elektropribor" plant worker A. Ryskin: "Yeltsin's statement on the introduction of special presidential rule in the country, in my view, will further exacerbate the life of society, which is already at boiling point. All that is happening in Russia at the moment can be compared to an operation without anesthetic. Except that the entire people are the patient. One would like to ask our politicians: How long can you go on testing their patience? I voted for Boris Nikolayevich in 1991. I would not do it now."

Here is a conversation with V. Krikunov, who lives in the country.

"I live in the country, actually," he said in reply to my question. "I came to the city to spend the weekend with my daughter and grandchildren. Then came the staggering news. What can you say? One thing is clear: It was all ill-timed. Oh dear, ill-timed... People in the countryside are swamped with problems and cares at this time. I do not think the fate of the Russian land can be decided in the city streets. You have to ask those who live and work on the land."

Chelyabinsk: Conflict at the Top, While the People Work

The members of the inner Soviet, who held an emergency sitting on Monday morning, discussed the situation in the country and oblast in connection with the Russian president's appeal to the people. The deputies expressed various opinions. The only thing they were unanimous on was that the president has the right to address the people and that calm and order must be maintained. By a majority of votes the oblast inner Soviet adopted a decision expressing its disagreement with the president's proposal on introducing special rule in the country. The inner Soviet believes that the introduction of special rule on the territory of Chelyabinsk Oblast without the oblast Soviet's consent is illegal and unacceptable. At the same time, it was proposed that the Supreme Soviet create conditions for the Russian president to conduct a poll of the country's population on voters' confidence in him.

There was a midday press conference at the oblast administration on Monday. Asked by your correspondent about the situation in the labor collectives, oblast administration chief Vadim Solovyev replied that people were calmly getting on with their jobs. He read out the results of a snap poll of the population on Sunday and Monday, the majority of whom, according to the sociologists, support the idea of the 25 April poll.

Nizhniy Novgorod: Businessmen Back Yeltsin

In a joint statement the Nizhniy Novgorod Oblast Union of Entrepreneurs and Association of Working People's Trade Unions warn of the real threat of the complete return of the party bureaucracy system. They made it in connection with President Boris Yeltsin's television appeal. The businessmen of the reform region believe that the "allegedly new apparatus is commanded by former nomenklatura working people who have undergone rapid 'restructuring.'"

The statement's authors criticize the local authorities' wait-and-see attitude, which, in their view, is preventing the democratically minded section of the population

from expressing its support for the president through the media. The statement stresses that the Union of Entrepreneurs and the Association of Working People's Trade Unions, which have over 2,500 small and medium-sized businessmen under their protection, have always supported President Boris Yeltsin's political line. They do so even now.

The signatories of the statement "admire the courage of the president, who has assumed personal responsibility for the fate of the reforms in Russia, and they believe that the 25 April vote will lead to a new Constitution and elections for all branches of authority."

Khabarovsk: What Kind of a Vegetable Is a "Plebiscite" and What Do You Eat It With?

When they saw a video recording of the president's appeal to the citizens of Russia on Sunday morning, the inhabitants of Khabarovsk were in no hurry at all to display political activeness. The busiest scenes were at the suburban bus stops: It turned out after several telephone calls that even the most active participants in the communists' rally the day before under the "All Power to the Soviets!" motto and the "Democratic Public of City and Kray" meeting, bearing diametrically opposite slogans, had set off for home...

"According to the Constitution, today is a holiday, so let the people take a break. We do not intend to hold any actions," G. Lysenko, deputy chairman of the kray Soviet, said, commenting on the situaiton. According to him, despite the inner Soviet members' concern over the actual introduction of presidential rule, the kray's organ of representative authority will not be making any assessments for the moment, intending to wait for the Constitutional Court's official findings. "As for my personal opinion," Galina Ivanovna said, "we must, of course, respect the president's opinion. But he and the Supreme Soviet must respect the Constitution. I too may not like the Congress of People's Deputies, but before eliminating it it is necessary to elaborate laws on elections and on the representation of the members of the Federation in parliament. The Federation Treaty has now been signed, but we do not have mechanisms for carrying out the joint management tasks laid down in it."

Nevertheless, there was an extraordinary sitting of the kray inner Soviet on Monday. After a tumultuous three-hour debate a small section of the pro-president deputies ostentatiously left the hall, disrupting the quorum. This action was due, in particular, to the following provisions from the statement to the kray's inhabitants: "The Russian Federation president's stance gives rise to anxiety over the preservation of the existing constitutional system in Russia and poses the threat of the reestablishment of a regime of personal power. The president could place himself above the law if he takes it upon himself to change the system of state management that is enshrined in legislation."

At the same time, Kray Governor V. Ishayev and the administration chiefs in a number of rayons publicly supported the president's appeal, noting in particular his "right to appeal to the people." The question is, though: Are the executive authorities not exaggerating the people's wish to speak on the subject? The date set by the president for the vote of confidence in him coincides in Amur Oblast with the height of the sowing season in orchard and truck garden plots, when every day is precious. Knowing the mood of my fellow locals, which is confirmed by the results of a public opinion poll, I venture to suggest that the majority of people in the Khabarovsk region are unlikely to prefer cultivating the strange vegetable called a "plebiscite" to working on the land on Sunday, 25 April...

Tyumen: Provinces Tired Of Surprises

Oblast Soviet Chairman Vladimir Ulyanov admitted:

"You begin to get tired of the surprises the federal organs of authority keep coming up with. They just do not want to get on quietly with their work. They have to keep jolting the people..."

Valeriy Bagin, deputy chief of the oblast administration:

"The weakening of the central authorities—both executive and representative—is fraught with entirely predictable and irrevocable centrifugal consequences. It would be reasonable for the president and the deputies to decide on early elections. Otherwise the crisis will not be resolved."

As is known, during consultations, oblast Soviet Chairman Vladimir Ulyanov and Administration Chief Leonid Roketskiy decided on the need for unity in the present situation. In an official appeal to the region's population, Leonid Roketskiy said: "As chief of the executive authority I will implement the president's and government's directives aimed at stabilizing the political and economic situation. As a citizen of Russia, invested with responsibilities and powers, I will not perpetrate and I will not allow anyone to perpetrate actions that contravene the Russian Federation Constitution. I am performing my activities and will continue to perform them in close contact with the oblast Soviet. I confirm that I am categorically opposed to efforts to transfer the conflict and confrontation between the authorities from the center to the regions.

Omsk: New Round Of Confrontation

Anatoliy Leontyev, chairman of Omsk Oblast Soviet and Russian Federation people's deputy, greatly regrets the Russian president's latest appeal to the people.

In his opinion, Boris Yeltsin's words to the effect that the president has been finally deprived of power are not true. In fact, Articles 109 and 121/6 of the Constitution, which were adopted by the deputies, serve merely to prevent an individual from acquiring limitless power, which ultimately could lead to diktat.

Asked by your correspondent how the president's appeal would affect Omsk Oblast, Anatoliy Pavlovich explained

that there is actually no confrontation in the region between the two authorities. There can only be disagreements on individual questions. Keeping the oblast on a stable footing—that is one of the paramount tasks of Soviets and administrations at all levels.

Kursk: Moscow Acts, We React

The first to condemn the president's actions on Sunday in Kursk were the Communists. Although the "action" was spontaneous and clearly failed.

Several people stood in Red Square holding up placards. Some very senior workers of the former CPSU oblast committee, who are now leaders of parties of the same orientation, had taken up position at some distance behind them. There were also 10-15 onlookers, but within 60-90 minutes the square was empty again.

On the other hand, a public committee in support of B. Yeltsin is being set up in the oblast. The action group includes, inter alia, Ye. Alekseyev, deputy chairman of Kursk City Soviet, Yu. Yudin, city soviet deputy and a doctor of sciences from the pedagogical institute, and Yu. Alyabyev, who works for the oblast property fund.

Further Reactions Noted

PM2603095193 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 93 First Edition p 2

[Feature comprising reports by Aleksandr Yermakov from Kemerovo, Dmitriy Usachev from Yakaterinburg, Dmitriy Usachev from Yekaterinburg, Oleg Zlobin from Saratov, unnamed correspondent from Petrozavodsk, Andrey Shishov from Nizhniy Novgorod, and unnamed correspondent from Barnaul, report "based on INTERFAX material" from Groznyy, and an ITAR-TASS report from Ufa: "What Russia Thinks. Our Own Correspondents and News Agencies Report"]

[Text] **Kemerovo: Who Is Pressing Yeltsin To Come to the Kuzbass? And Why?**

Boris Yeltsin's intention to come to the Kuzbass became known at an enlarged meeting of the Council of Workers Committees and the Independent Miners Union of the Kuzbass held in Kemerovo. The news was announced by Anatoliy Malykhin, the president's representative in the oblast. More extensive information was given by Russian Deputy Bela Denisenko. In her words, the other day she visited Sergey Filatov, leader of the President's administration, where the possible visit of Boris Nikolayevich to the Kuzbass was mentioned. But A. Sergeyev, chairman of the Independent Union of Russian Miners, who was also present, expressed doubt: Would the president not thereby be displaying his weakness by so demonstrably appealing for miners' support?

At the meeting in Kemerovo opinions were divided on this score. V. Sharipov, chairman of the Independent Miners Union Oblast Bureau sees nothing prejudicial in the president's visit. On the contrary, it would be possible to assemble in the Kuzbass representatives of other coal regions in time for the visit and collectively demonstrate support for the president and elaborate the strategy and tactics for the referendum campaign. On the other hand, it is impossible not to agree that Boris Yeltsin is "more needed" in the capital at such a critical moment.

Presumably, it is nevertheless he, not Filatov, and still iess Bela Denisenko, who will have the last word on this subject.

Meanwhile, a mood of distrust of the president's appeal prevails in the stance of Soviets at various levels. The oblast inner Soviet, having decided not to hold a session of the oblast Soviet, voted to hold the referendum on the question of confidence in the president. At the same time it did not agree with the point in the appeal which talks about the juridical invalidity of all decisions directed against the president's edicts and government's decrees. The inner Soviet intends to act precisely to the contrary: not to fulfill edicts and decrees.

And what about the working people themselves? The opinion of workers, let us say bluntly, is extremely contradictory. Some—very many—are interested only in the economy, or, to put it more simply, in pay. I heard one Kemerovo miner say the following: Miners will say nothing whatsoever about anything before supper, and when they have had a drink or two they start damning and blasting all the authorities. They do not mind who is at the helm, as long as they pay a bit more.

It is hard to blame them for this attitude; despite the prevailing opinion, the miner is not the richest man in the Kuzbass.

But there is another section—politicized workers: They try, not without the aid of their leaders, to understand all the roads leading to a dignified human life. Their efforts are directed toward persuading their more indifferent comrades into energetic political actions. Workers of Independent Miners Union committees are preparing for wide-scale agitation work in support of the president.

It is not easy to determine the opinion of the intelligentsia. In the opinion of former USSR Deputy Yu. Kaznin, scientists, doctors, and teachers, who have not received their fair share of attention, and therefore of material riches, are unlikely to support the president. Some of them are openly calling for Yeltsin's resignation.

Yekaterinburg: An Unanimity Unusual for Us

In Sverdlovsk Oblast the attitude to Boris Yeltsin's appeal is straightforward. This was shown by a meeting between Eduard Rossel, head of the administration, Anatoliy Grebenkin, chairman of the oblast Soviet, and Vitaliy Mashkov, the president's representative. In a statement for the press—I quote—"support was expressed for the Russian president, and the courageous action on which he has decided at such a critical moment was duly noted." The oblast leaders believe that Boris

Yeltsin has proposed an option for overcoming the political crisis via the most painless, peaceful path.

In an interview with URALSKIY RABOCHIY [Urals Worker] Anatoliy Grebenkin, chairman of Sverdlovsk Oblast Soviet, supported the president's proposals to give the people the chance to express their views on three questions: confidence in the president, the need for a bicameral parliament (without the Congress and the figure of Supreme Soviet chairman, and without a Presidium), and the fundamentals of the new Russian Constitution.

The situation in enterprises, and also on the streets of Yekaterinburg, is calm; no mass gatherings, rallies, or demonstrations have been observed. True, a groups of people stood on the square outside the city Soviet carrying placards, the most decent of which read: "Send Yeltsin Back to Butka!" (Butka is Boris Nikolayevich's birthplace).

Saratov: The Governor Is for a New Constitution

"It is impossible to carry out reforms purposefully without removing the thorn of the constitutional crisis," Yuriy Belykh, head of Saratov Oblast Administration, believes. "Until the principle of the separation of powers is clearly set out in a new constitution, we will not move even one step forward. We are dealing with confrontation between two branches of power. Such a political situation is fraught with dangerous consequences..."

Petrozavodsk: There Are No Grounds for Introducing Special Rule

The Russian Federation president has no grounds for introducing special rule, the Karelian Supreme Soviet believes. At its session in Petrozavodsk Tuesday [23 March] the Karelian parliament, having discussed B. Yeltsin's television address to the people, adopted a decree noting that it is impossible to hold a referendum in the republic within the time frame indicated by the president.

At the same time deputies supported the president's decision to hold a nationwide ballot on confidence in him. The decree stresses that Karelia will take all necessary measures "to prevent the confrontation between the legislative, executive, and judicial organs of power from moving" onto the republic's territory.

Nizhniy Novgorod: Bill of Rights Needed

Phoning ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA's bureau, Aleksandr Kosarikov, chairman of the Nizhniy Novgorod City Soviet, offered his version of a solution to the crisis.

In his opinion, the Brezhnev constitution, however many amendments have been made to it, is incapable of ensuring society's progress along the path of reforms.

But there is one—perhaps the last—chance of finding a way out of the existing state of affairs without further exacerbating the situation. There are the people who were legitimately elected by the people or appointed by the president—heads of administration and Soviet chairmen—and the leaders of Russian Federation subjects. They express the opinion of the whole of society. It is essential to prepare a sort of bill of rights which would contain the basic provisions of the new constitution—the attitude to land reform, the state structure, ownership, defense, and foreign policy.

A bill of rights agreed in this way with all leaders of Federation subjects should be submitted to the Congress of People's Deputies. The process of creating a new constitution and preparing for general elections of all branches of power from top to bottom would begin automatically. This in itself would rule out the need for a ballot on 25 April, which could split society still further.

Barnaul: Such Things Get in the Way of Work

The president's appeal to Russian citizens does not correspond to constitutional norms. Such things get in the way of the work of the local organs of power and distract forces which should be tackling the economy, Aleksandr Surikov, chairman of Altay Kray Soviet, stated.

Vladimir Rayfikesht, head of Altay Kray Administration, in his turn declared support for all the provisions put forward by the president in his appeal. At the same time he opposed any unconstitutional solutions to the crisis which has arisen in the country. V. Rayfikesht sees the way out of the existing situation in holding as soon as possible an all-Russian referendum with specific and clearly formulated questions.

Groznyy: Zorkin Is Right

The Chechnya Constitutional Court supports the position taken by the the Russian Federation Constitutional Court on President Boris Yeltsin's appeal to the people. A statement to this effect was made Tuesday at a press conference in Groznyy by Ikhtvan Gerikhanov, chairman of the Chechnya Constitutional Court. Evaluating the actions of his Moscow colleague Valeriy Zorkin, I. Gerikhanov noted that "he acted entirely correctly."

Ufa: Prayer for Peace

The Feast of the End of Ramadan began yesterday with a large service in the ancient mosque in Ufa. Never before has this ceremony gathered so many people. The mosque itself, its spacious courtyard, and the adjoining street were filled to bursting. The Bashkortostan Supreme Soviet Presidium had declared this a nonworking day. The sermon for the faithful included a call to "love all people as ourselves," and expressed alarm in connection with the events happening in the Russian capital. We believe, the sermon noted, that "people vested with power will exert all their efforts and will to find a peaceful outcome to the conflict."

Support for 25 Apr Referendum

LD2503160593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1120 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondents Nadezhda Potapova, Oleg Cherepanov, Boris Belyakov, and Vladimir Yakushev]

[Text] Yekaterinburg, 25 Mar—A session of the inner Soviet of Sverdlovsk Oblast today said the resolutions of the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies and the form in which the president's address was presented on 20 March were "destabilizing the situation in the country." The deputies passed a decision "to demand that the Russian powers seek ways of compromising and establishing political consensus." Those taking part in the session were prepared to consider the part of the president's address dealing with holding a vote of confidence and attitudes toward key issues of the state structure of Russia timely only should the Supreme Soviet and Congress refuse to look for measures to stabilize the situation. If the parties are "going to build up the conflict," the deputies of Sverdlovsk Oblast Soviet intend to advocate ahead-of-term elections to all branches of power.

Kurgan, 25 Mar—Representatives of various parties, movements and unions reached accord on the two main issues at a session of the sociopolitical center under the head of administration of Kurgan Oblast. They all believe that in order to get out of the constitutional crisis which has developed in the country it is essential to hold the 25 April referendum on confidence in President Boris Yeltsin, and then to hold ahead-of-term elections to all branches of elected and executive power on the basis of a new constitution of the Russian Federation.

Samara, 25 Mar—A fund in support of President Boris Yeltsin was set up in Samara yesterday. On its first day, the fund's account took in more than R3,000,000: contributions came from local small enterprises, the Samara stock exchange, and R50,000 from private individuals who wished to remain anonymous. The money will be put toward staging the 25 April referendum and other needs. Samara is ready to pay the funds coming in to the President Yeltsin support fund into Moscow every day.

Tomsk, 25 Mar—After the first stormy reaction to Saturday's [20 March] address by the president of Russia, a calm and composed situation has prevailed in Tomsk. The inner Soviet supported Boris Yeltsin in his desire to pass a new constitution as soon as possible and to hold a referendum on confidence, but at the same time expressed its negative attitude to the provisions of the presidential decree of 20 March. Not a single meeting or gathering has been held in Tomsk in these last few days.

Irkutsk Officials Turn Against Yeltsin

PM2503105393 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 24 Mar 93 p 1

[Vladimir Yermolayev report: "Governor Yuriy Nozhikov: 'I Would Sooner Go to Jail Than Give In'"]

[Text] Irkutsk—An emergency sitting of the inner Soviet and an extraordinary session of the oblast Soviet have been held in Irkutsk. Deputies considered that B. Yeltsin's address contravenes the Constitution and that he has placed himself above the law and the people. It was stressed: This is a question of an attempt at a state coup and the establishment of a dictatorship. The president is trying to duck responsibility for failures in domestic and foreign policy and the collapse of the reforms being carried out in line with IMF formulas, the Siberians noted.

Soviet Chairman V. Ignatenko reported that Irkutsk has not received a single edict. His appeals to various Moscow bodies has resulted in nothing. On Sunday [21 March] he got in touch with neighboring regions for the purposes of possible coordinated actions. It became clear in particular that the Tuva Supreme Soviet Presidium had made a negative assessment of B. Yeltsin's actions.

"There is legal madness going on, primarily in the center. And the localities are being infected," I. Shirobokov, the president's representative in the oblast, said from the rostrum. "When Nozhikov was dismissed, serious violations were committed; he was deprived of the possibility of explaining himself."

Irkutsk City Soviet Chairman G. Khoroshilov said indignantly:

"The president is unforgivably showing contempt for judicial power, moving aside representative power, threatening to disband the Congress, telling us all to shut up, and has sorted out Yu. Nozhikov. A blow has been dealt to all honest Russians, and fear and confusion are being sown in the hearts of some, and anger in the hearts of others."

Of course, not everyone condemned the president, supported the Congress, and stood up staunchly for Yuriy Abramovich. In particular, accusations were made against the latter for fighting all the time—previously against the CPSU and now against the center—instead of worrying about the economy. He objected:

"I have never fought against anyone; all I do is constantly defend myself and try to defend my fellow countrymen against arbitrariness."

I have already had occasion to write about this. The oblast Soviet, the Administration, and the Angara region oblast trade union council, for instance, opposed B. Yeltsin's edict which essentially envisaged the creation of an ultra-monopolist monster in the power industry. The oblast was being deprived of the sector that brought in the greatest income. The Siberians have paid a very

high price for their efficient hydroelectric power stations in Irkutsk, Bratsk, and Ust-Ilimsk. Thousands of hectares of the most fertile land in the floodplain of the Angara and other rivers were flooded, and protected taiga was destroyed. At the memorable conference in Cheboksary last year, the president attacked the refractory governor, threatening to dismiss him.

The Siberians are not easily intimidated. Eight Russian Federation people's deputies, including Yuriy Abramovich, petitioned the Constitutional Court to check the lawfulness of the edict. And the mightiest anger overcame the rebellious Yu. Nozhikov.

"I have always supported the president," he said, "but I cannot unthinkingly go along with things. The establishment of an authoritarian power means the end of reforms and democracy. My dismissal is being explained by deficiencies in foreign economic activity, although the commission did not specify them to me. On the contrary, they even praised me. A dishonest political game is going on. They needed to deal with me rather than those engaged in corruption. The authorities get along fine with the latter, they live off their money. Today I have joined the ranks of the unemployed. Let the prosecutor's office deal with me; I am prepared to give up the deputies' immunity. If they want to put me in jail they will do so, but I will not give in nevertheless!"

The deputies decided to defend the governor, proposing that the unjustified edict be repealed. The leaders of major enterprises in the Angara region also addressed this demand to Moscow. "All power to the Soviets!" "The law is above everything else," and "We will not give up the administration head"—rallies and meetings in collectives are being held under these slogans.

Will the Siberians' voices be heard?

Maritime Kray Citizens Urged To Vote for Yeltsin

OW2603041593 Vladivostok Radiostantsiya Tikhiy Okean Maritime Network in Russian 0815 GMT 21 March 93

[From the "Pacific Ocean" program]

[Text] As we already informed you, Boris Yeltsin has signed an edict naming 25 April 1993 as the day for holding a vote of confidence in the president and the vice president of the Russian Federation. He announced this in a television appeal to the citizens of Russia on Saturday evening [20 March]. Boris Yeltsin noted that he took this step because he was not elected by the Congress or the Supreme Soviet but by the people, who are to decide whether or not he must carry out his responsibilities. Eduard Nikitich Vershinin, the Maritime Kray member of the Russian Supreme Soviet asked to say a few words on our program.

[Begin Vershinin recording] The crisis has entered a decisive phase. Russia has been submerged in chaos for three years, and it has three options before it:

First, there is the option of one to two years of expedited but painful reforms set by the president; second, there is Khasbulatov's option of 10 to 15 years of the so-called 'soft' introduction of reforms; and third, there is [word indistinct] Goryachev option of a complete return to a Communist planned economy; and in the face of opposition to this option, at the recently-held Congress they said that they will proclaim civil war.

This savage struggle for the right to make decisions in Russia, to carry out our own economic course in this country, has been going for three whole years. The drama of the situation is that the executive authority does not have the usual parliament before it as they have in other civilized countries, but a huge three-tiered structure not heretofore seen in parliamentary practice.

The first tier is the Congress, which for the second time in three months has tilted in favor of the restoration of communism. The second tier is the Supreme Soviet which, in view of the unceasing struggle to choose one of the three options, adopts contradictory decisions every day. The laws adopted today contradict the ones adopted yesterday. This disorients law and order, economic leaders, and so on. In view of the necessity for compromise, which is shaped differently every day, the legislature does not intervene at all, and this also causes chaos. The third tier—a purely Russian invention—is the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

No parliament in the world has one of these, and I hope they never will have such an organ of authority. And, inasmuch as this particular center lays claim to making decisions in the country, it also lays claim on the exercise of full control over the executive authority. It, namely the Ruslan Khasbulatov team in the shape of the Presidium—a well chosen team—opposes presidential authority, and this specifically determines the [word indistinct] situation. The chairman of the Presidium is not only struggling for the realization of his—and only his own course of reforms—but for absolute control over the government, the executive authority. And first of all, for removal of the president's control over the government; turning the president into a purely decorative structure, a figurehead, a symbol of the state and no more.

It is not worth trusting the words of the Supreme Soviet or its Presidium. It is simply enough to calmly analyze the decisions being adopted to see that all the springs and cogs of the state mechanism, week after week, subordinate themselves to this single center in adoption and realization of decisions in Russia. Specifically because of this, in recent years...[changes thought] the last two years, the struggle in the Congress has taken on the appearance of a constitutional one, inasmuch as it is only possible to deprive the president of the power and the right to govern the country with the aid of corrections to the constitution. In connection with this, the Congress, artificially conducted by our Presidium, is blocking the adoption of the new constitution which removes the three tiers in the law-making body.

In connection with this, the new constitution, which is also thoroughly contradictory, is practically being set aside. It is also a sort of a compromise, and that is why the president's every second step must be declared unconstitutional, and put him outside the law. There are more than enough contradictions which [word indistinct] made by the Supreme Soviet. Nevertheless, before every Russian there is the task of making a choice, because the alternative offered by the communists, that of civil war, that is, bringing politics and with it the parliament into our living rooms, is an alternative that should not suit any intelligent Russian. Russia needs some kind of firm authority in the crisis period, whether it be the authority of the chairman of the Supreme Soviet Presidium or the authority of the president.

I support presidential authority, and call on every citizen of Maritime Kray and my electors: If the situation reaches a vote—events are unfolding in a matter of hours and it is quite possible that within the first three days everything will be decided—if it comes to a poll, a plebiscite, or a referendum in the end, support the presidential executive authority, which will not only take upon itself the duty but also the responsibility for the conduct of its reform option. [end recording]

Moscow Mayor, City Government Support Yeltsin

LD2503184593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1545 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Shevel]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—The Moscow city government has adopted a statement declaring its unambiguous support for the stand of the Russian president in the present conflict between the legislative, executive, and judicial structures of authority. This was stated by Moscow's Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov at a news conference today.

Yuriy Luzhkov stressed that the mayor's office and the government of Moscow consider that further conflict between the Supreme Soviet, the body of deputies, and the president could lead to events becoming uncontrollable. In the situation which developed, the president was compelled to take measures which would protect the powers given to him by the entire people, and to ensure the principle of division of authorities envisioned by the country's Constitution, the mayor believes.

The mayor of Moscow described the present situation in the capital as very tense. He said the Moscow city government has been receiving a mass of requests and demands from various labor collectives, parties, and organizations wanting to hold rallies, pickets, and marches. The head of the city government gave his assurance that the city authorities are taking all measures to ensure that law and order are upheld in the coming days, that constitutional processes are implemented, and that individual citizens and the work of the city's structures providing for vital needs will be protected.

Criticize Court Decision

OW2503175693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1726 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Mayor of Moscow Yuriy Luzhkov has described the situation in Russia as highly dangerous. Speaking at a news conference on Thursday [25 March], he said "we have drawn to a line separating constitutional processes and ungovernable events." He was commenting on the outcome of confrontation between the government, Supreme Soviet and Congress.

Luzhkov spoke of the city government's firm support for the President and equality by all branches of power as the main principle distinguishing a democratic society.

He does not believe there is anything unconstitutional either in Yeltsin's address to the nation or decrees. On the reaction by the Chairman of the Constitutional Court, he said, Valeriy Zorkin had opened "doors to the domain of civil war" instead of alleviating public fears.

The Mayor pledged his administration's resolve to ensure public law, order and security during, as he put it, a complicated period of deliberations by a special session of the Congress of People's Deputies. Public order is to be enforced by the Moscow police reinforced by Interior Ministry troops.

North Ossetian Leader: People Will Have To Take Power

OW2503183193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1726 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] North Ossetia and Ingushetia do not trust the center, and tackle their problems on their own, sometimes by force, head of the interim administration in North Ossetia and Ingushetia, Aleksandr Kotenkov, announced in Vladikavkaz on Thursday [25 March].

Kotenkov expressed the opinion that political disagreements in the center complicated stabilization in the periphery. Meanwhile, the absolute majority of the problems facing Russia's southern regions must be solved at the federal level, he said.

To quote Kotenkov, the extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies will weaken all branches of authority even further. In his opinion, the time is coming when power will have to be taken by the people who will elect new leaders.

North Ossetia's Galazov Stresses Economy, Not Referendum

LD2503183693 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0927 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 25 March—"As chairman of the North Ossetian Supreme Soviet and as a citizen, I have been, and will be, in favor of a united, indivisible, and strong Russia," an ITAR-TASS correspondent was told by the head of the republic's parliament, Akhsarbek Galazov, before he flew to Moscow for the Ninth Congress of People's Deputies. The North Ossetian leader believes that "in Russia there must be a strong center unifying the republics, krays, and oblasts and carrying out a sensible national policy. This policy must be based on the federation treaty."

The president, in the opinion of Akhsarbek Galazov, must act in the role of guarantor of stability in Russia. But he does not share Boris Yeltsin's position on a nationwide vote. "Today, trying to find out the attitude of the people toward you via a plebiscite is not the most necessary work. The people are being reduced to penury. They are thinking about how to get their daily bread and clothing, how to go about their difficult life," the head of the North Ossetian parliament said. "We need to get rid of all disagreements. All leaders should be concentrating on the economy, not on politics," he stressed.

Tatar Leader Believes Impeachment Will Not Occur

OW2503200793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1941 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Tatarstan's President Mintimer Shaymiyev believes "the impeachment of Russia's President will not lead to stability in the country." Speaking at a news-conference in Kazan on Thursday [25 March], he blamed the mistakes of the President and Parliament above all on the absence of a clear-cut program of economic reform.

Concerning President Yeltsin's statement of March 20, Mr. Shaymiyev said that Mr. Yeltsin had the right to address the people with the question of confidence in their President, but the question of constitutional principles needs to be excluded. In his opinion, it won't get to impeachment at the Congress. Mr. Shaymiyev said "the most reasonable thing for deputies" would be to adopt a decision on elections of both the President and the Congress.

Tatarstan's leader believes that the only way out of the constitutional crisis would be to ask the people about their confidence in the President and the Congress. However, in his opinion to put the issue on the constitution to a referendum would be premature. "It is not clear what draft is meant, Mr. Shaymiyev stressed, since even the constitutional commission itself disagrees on a constitution." Commenting on the Tatar Parliament's silence over events in Moscow, the President said that "the economic independence of the republic orients deputies towards local problems. People are not interested in what's going on in Moscow," he stressed. In Mr. Shaymiyev's view, "the centre has lost the trust of regions because of unwise policy."

Economics Minister Nechayev Released From Post

LD2603090293 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0850 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow, 26 Mar—On recomendation of the prime minister, by a decree of Boris Yeltsin, Andrey Nechayev has been released from his post as minister of the economy "in connection with his transfer to other work."

Justice Minister Explains Resignation, Supports Yeltsin

LD2503132993 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1200 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] The press service of the Russian Ministry of Justice has been authorized to circulate the following statement by Minister Nikolay Federov: My decision to resign is connected with the impossibility of reconciling myself with the depressing facts of contempt for the work of state bodies and the absence of professionalism and responsibility in preparing many of the normative decisions.

One thing is sure: I remain a supporter of the president. As to my future, I doubt that I will stay outside politics.

Citizens Convicted of Espionage Not Military Personnel

OW2503182293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1723 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In his exclusive interview with INTERFAX Colonel of Justice Yevgeniy Lazarev, who chaired at the trial, declared that mass media messages concerning conviction of four Russian citizens for espionage "are not quite true." He pointed out that the convicted were not servicemen as mass media publications assert.

Two former servicemen (retired soldiers) and one former civilian of the Russian army and a civil person have been convicted according to item "A," Article 64 of the Russian Criminal Code 9 (high treason in the form of espionage). The military court of the Moscow military district has sentenced them to different terms of imprisonment in a corrective-labor prison with reinforced regime and confiscated their property.

According to Lazarev, the court has revealed that acting together to the detriment of the country's defense capability, the convicted were collecting and handing over to a representative of a western special service "top secret documents and other information." The convincted

themselves testified that they committed this crime "led by mercenary motives." At the same time the court took into account the fact that "the convicted have frankly repented and earlier were positively characterized and actively assisted in exposing the crime" and decided to give them a softer punishment but not a 10- year imprisonment envisaged by the law for such kind of a crime.

Economic Issues

Yeltsin Writes Khasbulatov on Coal Privatization Decree

LD2503210393 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1623 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin today sent a letter to Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet. As the president's press service reports, this letter constitutes a reply to a proposal to suspend the validity of one of the Russian Federation president's decrees before the adoption by the Supreme Soviet of a decision on an endorsement of the state privatization program for 1993. It concerns the decree of 30 December 1992 "On the privatization of associations, enterprises, and organizations of the coal industry and their conversion into joint-stock companies."

Boris Yeltsin points out that the peculiarities of the privatization of enterprises in the industry and converting them into joint-stock companies, which are envisioned by this decree, should not be seen as contradicting existing legislation. The legal basis for the adoption of the aforementioned document is the Russian Federation president's decree of 14 August 1992 "On the peculiarities of the conversion of state enterprises, associations, and organizations of the fuel and power complex into joint-stock companies." It envisioned the publication of special decrees determining the peculiarities of the privatization of enterprises of the fuel and power complex and converting them into joint-stock companies. These decrees could go beyond the framework of the articles of the acts of legislation which were adopted by parliament. The decree of 30 December was the last special act adopted before the execution of the decree of 14 August 1992.

Government Presidium Discusses Economic Policy

LD2503212693 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By correspondent S.Milyanchikov; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Today's meeting of the Presidium of the Russian Council of Ministers was devoted to a discussion of economic policy for the next two months. In line with a presidential decree the government is due within five days to outline priority economic reform measures. It is not a matter of changing the reform course but only of clarifying specific steps.

According to Deputy Prime Minister Boris Fedorov, the government should in this complex political situation act as a unified team. The Council of Ministers has been giving the impression that it was waiting for something. The process of adopting decisions should now be speeded up and they should be strictly implemented. In the view of the deputy prime minister the Cabinet should sensibly link popular with unpopular economic measures in the period until the nationwide referendum is held. He also considers that implementation of the entire set of measures will require vast resources and could lead to a further spiral of inflation.

Despite the constitutional crisis the government has been engaged on urgent business. Additional measures to stabilize the agro- industrial complex were discussed today. According to Agricultural Minister Viktor Khlystun, the task is being set in present conditions not of raising agricultural output but of stabilizing it. A decision envisions a number of measures for state regulation of the development of agrarian reform.

Fedorov on Minimum Salaries, Budget Financing

OW2503142493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1414 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian Vice Premier Boris Fedorov stressed that in the current "very complicated" political situation, "the government should act as a unified team, so that it doesn't appear to be taking cover or biding time." He emphasized that they will have to make decisions more quickly and unfailingly fulfill them. The vice premier addressed a session of the government presidium on Thursday.

Fedorov feels that in the time period before the national vote on April 25, the cabinet should sensibly coordinate popular and unpopular measures. He admitted that the list of priority steps was prepared in haste and that the consequences of their implementation were not figured to the end. Fedorov pointed out that the minimum salary increase to 4500 rubles a month would cost 300 Bn [billion] rubles a month alone. He said the possibilities for budget financing were minimal, claiming, "you won't take anything from the budget now."

If the government pays for the credits the Central Bank [of Russia—CBR] is granting at market rates, budget expenditures will exceed revenues, predicted the deputy cabinet head. Fedorov said the list of priority measures stipulates adopting decisions and resolutions. Fifteen of these are already prepared.

"It is important not to upset the April 25 vote, since the national plebiscite is the key to reforms," stressed the vice premier.

He said that implementing all the measures stipulated by the list will require major funding and could bring inflation back to last year's level, which was around 2500

over the course of 12 months. However, even these funds, Fedorov said, are mere "kopecks compared to what the country needs." He hopes, nonetheless, that the cabinet will manage to improve the situation of the less fortunate segments of society.

The vice premier said the Russian budget deficit is currently 11

of the gross national product.

Several members of the presidium criticized the program developed by Fedorov's staff, primarily for its declarative manner and its lack of a mechanism for realizing the planned measures. Vice Premier Georgiy Khizha feels the list must be supplemented with segments on policy in the areas of prices and finance. He expressed doubt that the measures indicated on the list would be effective. Deputy cabinet head Yuriy Yarov said the document should include a provision on improving executive power structures, producing goods, stabilizing export policy, and clearly determining priorities in the economy.

Vice Premier Vladimir Shumeyko, who chaired the discussion of the issue (Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin was in negotiations with Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar - IF [INTERFAX]), reminded members of the presidium that in the current difficult situation the government is primarily a political organ. He said that now they must focus their efforts on fulfilling adopted decisions. "If the planned time tables for realizing the stipulated measures are not met, we will dismiss those people," warned Shumeyko.

Central Bank Chairman Viktor Gerashchenko evaluated as impermissible the tone of a letter sent to him from Vice Premier Fedorov, which claimed that a failure on behalf of the CBR to fulfill recommendations and decisions from the government would be viewed as refusal to conduct reforms, and that the issue of dismissing the CBR leader would be put before the president. Gerashchenko said that, according to his information, the issue of his dismissal has already been put before the president. He added that if cabinet members appeal to him in such a tone in the future, he would return the memos without considering them.

Government Plans To Delay Foreign Debt Repayments

OW2503143693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1414 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Thursday, the Russian government's presidium approved the list of top-priority measures to implement the president's decree on the work of the executive branch pending the settlement of the crisis of power, published on March 24.

The draft document, presented by Vice-Premier Boris Fedorov, envisages a 6-month delay in the repayment of the foreign debt, as long as emergency stabilization measures are in effect; the establishment of the National Fund for the Stabilization of the Ruble at the expense of the available reserves and of a part of international credits (a total of about $3 Bn [billion]), and the introduction of the Central Bank's new, 8% monthly interest rate.

It also proposes measures to curb discrimination against the ruble on the Russian market and to enhance the efficiency of customs and financial control over exports.

There are plans to limit the budget deficit to 5% of the gross national product.

The document also puts "rigid limits" on the growth of the Central Bank's credits and envisages measures to check the growth of the credit mass from 40% in the first quarter of 1993 to 15% in the fourth quarter.

If the Central Bank refuses to implement the proposed measures, "the question of replacing its leaders will be raised". Anyway, the Central Bank's leadership must be strengthened with people supporting the government, says the document.

The list of financial measures includes an additional increase in the savings banks' interests rates as a way of protecting the population from inflation, raising minimum wage paid to workers at state-run enterprises to 4500 rubles, further pension increases in the middle of the year and the provision of social guarantees in the event of an enterprise's bankruptcy.

A simpler procedure of allotting plots of land to the citizens was proposed. Also, there are plans to reduce the term of the moratorium on the sale of plots of land, to promote small businesses and to adopt documents on the reorganization of enterprises in the event of bankruptcy.

To quote Vice-Premier Vladimir Shumeyko, the implementation of the first-priority measures, envisaged in the document, will be backed up by the president's decrees and resolutions, and by the Cabinet which has been granted the right to initiate legislation.

The plan of top-priority measures is to be finalized within the next three days, with due account taken of the recommendations given during the meeting of the Cabinet's presidium.

Vice-Premier Boris Fedorov gave a copy of this document to INTERFAX.

Government Adopts Measures To Stabilize Agriculture

LD2503164793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1616 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Ivan Ivanov and Gennadiy Talalayev]

[Text] Moscow March 25 TASS—"A sharp discrepancy between prices for industrial and agricultural products has led to a situation, when residents of rural areas failed to purchase the necessary amount of agricultural machinery, fertilizers, agricultural chemicals," Viktor Khylystun, Russian minister for agriculture, said at a session of the Presidium of the Russian Council of Ministers.

"As a result, a difficult situation emerged by the beginning of sowing campaign, Khylystun said. He has submitted to the session of the government a draft resolution on additional measures to stabilise agricultural production in 1993.

Khylystun pointed out that under present conditions the task is not to increase agricultural production, since it cannot be implemented at present, but to stabilise it. The draft resolution provides for selling shares of privatised enterprises of processing industry to agricultural and fishing enterprises which are expected to stimulate their interest in expanding production.

Khylystun said that among measures to encourage and give support to agricultural industry are the compensation of expenditures on electricity, natural gas and other kinds of fuel used for vegetable growing on closed ground. Subsidies will be allocated for cattle breeding and the purchase of pedigree cattle and poultry. A number of tax privileges for agricultural manufactures are envisaged. A long-term credit worth 200 billion roubles will be allocated for the construction and reconstruction of most important facilities of agricultural processing industry.

A total of 225 billion roubles will be allocated for the development of peasant farms and inter-farm cooperation.

After an almost two-hour discussion a resolution was adopted to approve the draft resolution and instruct a number of ministries and departments to amend it.

The session of the government adopted a programme of the Russian Federation for the development of communication means without debates, a state programme of protection forests from fires, and approved a draft resolution of the Russian Government on the reorganization of the Russian Committee for the Social-Economic Development of the North.

Khizha Says Nation on Verge of Inflation 'Spiral'

OW2503182893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1723 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia's Vice-Premier Georgiy Khizha warned that Russia was on the verge of yet another spiral of inflation given the expected price-rise on coal. He told the government's presidium on Thursday that prices on gas had been raised 3.7 times recently. Now the fuel and energy complex has to raise prices on coal proportionally, he added.

Khizha believes that new prices on coal will cause a general price rise. He also said that in the absence of any state regulation, the government should work out a more clear-cut pricing policy.

Government Predicts No Sharp Production Decline in '93

LD2503225993 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2117 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 25 TASS—The press centre of the Russian Government issued an economic forecast on Thursday [25 March], saying that there will be no sharp production decline in Russia in 1993.

The press release says that "over the first 20 days of March there were not dramatic changes in major industrial production over the February figures."

A poll of 700 directors of industrial enterprises says that 54 per cent of them do not predict any decline of production at their enterprises within the next few months. Analyses show that defence and machine-building industries show the strongest optimism about their performance in 1993. At the same time, coal, chemical, petrochemical, timber and wood-working industries expect that their production will drop this year.

Fedorov Criticizes Central Bank 'Inaction'

MK2503124093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 93 p 2

[Olga Krushelnitskaya report under the rubric "Economy:": "Central Bank Obstructs Reforms. Vice Premier Boris Fedorov Is Not Going To Put up With it"]

[Text] Vice Premier Boris Fedorov sent a letter to the president, head of parliament, and government chairman listing urgent measures Central Bank chiefs must take. The prime minister revealed at a press conference the same day [no date specified] that the reason for this decision was an inadmissible situation in the country in which all attempts by the government in the course of three months to coordinate monetary policy come up against Central Bank inaction. The latter does not observe the law on the Central Bank, does not

protect our national currency, and does not take specific measures to fight inflation, thus making all the talk about stimulating the economy an empty exercise. Besides, Fedorov says, Central Bank chiefs obstruct talks with the International Monetary Fund. The vice premier cautioned that he would interpret failure to act on the suggested measures as the Central Bank's refusal to take part in reforms.

Boris Fedorov also said he was going to make a statement on the use of the ruble. Following the USSR's collapse, the former republics inherited a common currency—the Soviet ruble—that is issued exclusively by our Central Bank. The monetary policy being followed today by most countries in the ruble zone, however, does not help stabilize the ruble. Worse, it accounts for the 125- percent inflation in Russia. The former republics should make an immediate choice: Either they join the ruble system and sign appropriate agreements, or they do not.

The vice premier issued a directive the other day on preparing tax and budget reforms in order that, in market conditions, the tax system mechanism should be brought to line with the budget mechanism. The Finance Ministry is asked to prepare in a week's time a program of budgetary prudence.

It was also decided to create a working group that would urgently present proposals on protecting the population against the devaluation of their bank deposits.

Boris Fedorov issued directives putting caps on credits for CIS countries until a corresponding decision on this score has been made by the Supreme Soviet. Order should immediately be installed in this sphere because Russia often covers any kind of payments by issuing additional money.

Military & Space Issues

Moscow Commander Denies 'Agitation' Visits by Deputy

PM2503195093 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 26 Mar 93 First Edition p 1

[Report by Igor Andreyev and Viktor Litovkin: "Army Not Awaiting Reserve General Achalov"]

[Text] General Leontiy Kuznetsov, commander of Moscow Military District, has categorically denied reports of "agitation" visits to units of the capital's garrison by Colonel General V. Achalov, former USSR deputy defense minister.

"The situation in subunits is calm and businesslike. The troops are on scheduled training sessions. I have asked commanders whether people's deputies have visited units. Judging by reports, there have been no such visits," Gen. Kuznetsov said.

[IZVESTIYA] "But the reports do not mention deputies in general, but just one of them—Gen. Vladislav Achalov."

[Kuznetsov] "He is a deputy just like the rest. I repeat, none of them has visited Moscow Military District units or agitated on anyone's behalf."

[IZVESTIYA] "Is former Deputy Defense Minister Gen. Achalov listed in the ranks of the Russian Army?"

[Kuznetsov] "I did not see his discharge order... Now I have a question for IZVESTIYA. How is it that issue No. 53 of the newspaper reported an assembly of officers of the Moscow Military District held by officers and generals of the 'Officers' Union' who have been discharged to the reserves? I take this opportunity to clarify that what took place was an assembly of officers of the Moscow region, and that is not the same thing at all as the Moscow [military] district."

[IZVESTIYA] "But we did say in our report on the assembly, citing the Moscow Military District Staff, that the assembly has no connection with the district."

The editorial office has learned that former USSR Deputy Defense Minister Col. Gen. Vladislav Achalov was discharged to the reserves by order No. 01396 of 15 November 1991 of the USSR defense minister. His personal file is still in the hands of the Russian general prosecutor.

Our calls to commanders of military units billeted in Moscow confirmed the commander's words—the Army neither expects nor plans to expect Achalov.

It would appear that the hullabaloo over Gen. Achalov is being raised by his comrades in the 'Officers' Union," which consists of people like him, who have been discharged to the reserves or have retired, but parade up and down the capital in military uniform, to which they have now only an oblique relation.

Let us recall: The prosecutor's office has the most serious grievances against Gen. Achalov in connection with his active involvement in the putsch of August 1991. The Supreme Soviet then refused to "give up" their colleague, and his immunity as a deputy protects him from investigation. Moreover, R. Khasbulatov created an analytical center attached to the parliament chairman and appointed V. Achalov its leader. The speaker did not conceal his annoyance when the Russian defense minister, addressing a Supreme Soviet session, drew attention to a fresh anticonstitutional action on Deputy V. Achalov's part: his participation in the rally which called itself the "officers' assembly." And now the rumors designed to show the "analyst"-general's substantial influence in the Army. Well, in the course of preparation for the new extraordinary Congress, rumors are an excellent means of whipping up passions.

Garrison Demands Grachev's, Kozyrev's Removal

PM2503110593 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 25 Mar 93 p 2

[Appeal to Russian Federation Supreme Soviet "adopted unanimously at the Voronezh Garrison Officers' Assembly" and signed by Yu. Orlov, chairman of the council of the Voronezh Oblast Branch of the Officers' Union: "We Demand Urgent Measures. Appeal to Russian Federation Supreme Soviet"]

[Text] The destructive processes in industry, agriculture, and the Army have not gone unnoticed by the people. Proof of that is the creation of various patriotic public organizations in the fatherland whose main task is to halt this process. To this end patriotic officers serving in the Army, the internal troops, the security service, and the reserve met for the Voronezh Garrison officers' assembly.

Having analyzed the situation, the officers' assembly states:

—the destruction of the USSR has been carried out through the joint actions of imperialism, Zionism, and internal reaction;

—the wreckers' main task is to tear the state of the USSR into ethnic shreds, destroy its ability to resist, and thus prepare via World War III for the redistribution of sources of raw materials and markets;

—World War III, which has developed from "cold" to "hot" war, has begun, as World War I did, in the Balkans and has already been transferred to trouble spots on the territory of the USSR;

—with the destruction of the USSR 70-80 percent of defense potential is controlled by national-separatists and the governments of breakaway republics;

—in these conditions Russia has been left virtually "naked," with a "holey" ABM and air defense system, and its most strategically important installations are within reach of both strategic offensive arms and tactical weapons;

—our nuclear missile weapons, which, under the START II Treaty—President Yeltsin's treacherous treaty—are to be destroyed, are our last hope (no longer a guarantee).

There can be only one main conclusion drawn from the above—the restoration of the USSR and its armed forces, capable of sobering up the ideologists of World War III. For this the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet and (if it lacks the powers) the Congress of Russian People's Deputies must immediately start being guided by the results of the referendum of 17 March 1991.

People who are able, willing, and will effect unification must be brought to the political levers of power in Russia since the people authorized them to take such actions in the 17 March referendum.

The situation in the country and the world requires urgent measures:

—Kozyrev and Grachev must be removed from their posts for damaging Russia's security and defense capability;

—the laws on the universal military service obligation must be reviewed with a view to ensuring the normal staffing of units and formations, and the laws on deserters must be repealed;

—a commission comprising representatives of units and ships of the Army and Security Ministry, the "Officers' Union," and the officers' assembly, that is, middle-ranking people with real information about the troops' combat status and the country's security, must be set up under the Supreme Soviet.

The result of this commission's work should be purposeful work by the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet to strengthen Russia's defense.

As a temporary but emergency measure we ask for support for the initiative from below regarding the creation of fortified areas [ukreprayony], which should be set up and led by garrison heads and, in accordance with the mobilization plan, staffed with reservist servicemen, that is, on the lines of reserve armies. The fortified areas should guard air defense installations, airfields, strategic offensive arms installations, and the most important facilities for the country's existence.

The heads of the fortified areas should be given the right to use materiel regardless of form of ownership.

Why are we appealing to the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet? Because it, too, is guilty before the peoples for the destruction of the USSR.

Officers did not fulfill their oath, since they were trained to defend their homeland from a visible external enemy, and did not discern the covert, internal enemy in time.

RSFSR Supreme Soviet deputies also proved incapable of predicting the consequences of the sovereignization swiftly launched by current Russian President B.N. Yeltsin.

We are also appealing to the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet because presidential power is being formed by a single person, who has sucked in "agents of influence," traitors to the homeland, and incompetent leaders who owe their positions to personal devotion. The social foundation of this power is made up of people who have united in a single team to plunder the people and Russia.

The Russian Federation Supreme Soviet is far purer and closer to the people, although here too there are double-dealers and blabbermouths, though we hope that they are in the minority.

The solution to the critical situation resides in uniting the representative branch at all levels with the people, with patriotic forces for whom internationalism and the friendship of the peoples are not empty phrases.

The appeal was adopted unanimously at the Voronezh Garrison Officers' Assembly.

[Signed] Yu. Orlov, chairman of the council of the Voronezh Oblast Branch of the Officers' Union

Military Doctrine Examination 'Probably' Postponed

PM2503145593 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 24 Mar 93 p 1

[Anatoliy Dokuchayev report under the "From Our Information Bureau" rubric: "Russian Federation Draft Military Doctrine Formulated"]

[Text] Owing to the complex sociopolitical situation in the country, the time set aside by the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet and the Security Council for examining an important legal document of a defense nature will probably be postponed until a later date. Major General Gennadiy Ivanov, chief of the Russian Federation Ministry of Defense Directorate for Military Organizational Development and Reforms, announced this at a briefing that has been held.

Experts from the Ministry of Defense have taken part in formulating the military doctrine. The essence of their position, in Gennadiy Ivanov's opinion, has been set out in the wording of the term "military doctrine." The draft document notes that the Russian Federation military doctrine is a system of views that are officially adopted in the state regarding military conflicts and how to avoid them; the use of military force to defend sovereignty, territorial integrity, and other vitally important interests of the individual, society, and the state; and military organizational development.

Military Satellite Launched From Baykonur

LD2603115993 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1138 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow, 26 Mar—A Zenit rocket carrying the satellite Kosmos-2237 was launched from the Baykonur cosmodrome at 0521 Moscow time today. The satellite was launched on behalf of the Russian Federation Defense Ministry. An ITAR-TASS correspondent learned this at the press center of the Military Space Forces.

Experimental 'Start' Rocket Launched

LD2503172793 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1537 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Veronika Romanenkova]

[Text] Moscow, 25 March—Today, at 1615 hours, the launch of the "Start" experimental rocket carrying a space apparatus was carried out. The ITAR-TASS correspondent was told this at the press center of the Military-Space Forces.

The mass of the space apparatus is 260 kg. The operating height of the orbit is 700 km.

The "Start" rocket is a converted rocket. It has been created on the basis of the "RS-12M" ballistic missile that is in service (known in the West as SS-25). The new space complex has been created from extra-budget funds (taking part in financing the complex were the "IVK" joint-stock company, the "Kompleks" Scientific and Technical Center [NTTs], and the "Bauman" State Technical College in Moscow. Thanks to this, the producer of rockets of this class—the Votkinsk machinebuilding works in Udmurtia—was given the opportunity to apply its state-of-the-art output for peaceful purposes, too. Wide opportunities are opening up here inasmuch as the "Start" can put into orbit space apparatuses with a mass of up to one tonne, which it is inexpedient to do by means of other carrier-rockets being operated today.

The space apparatus will be controlled by the Flight Control Center of apparatuses for scientific and national economy purposes, which is part of the Military-Space Forces.

Orbit Parameters Given

LD2603115793 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0925 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, 26 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Today the Flight Control Center reported that on 25 March 1993 the first ever launch of a "Start-1" experimental satellite was carried out with the help of a "Start-1" rocket carrier from Plesetsk cosmodrome.

The "Start-1" rocket carrier was designed within the conversion framework on the basis of the RS-12M intercontinental ballistic missile, which is known abroad as the SS-25 missile. The modernization of this missile fully meets the conditions of the START II Russian-U.S. Treaty on the reduction of strategic offensive weapons.

The "Start-1" satellite, which is a dummy of correct size and weight for flying-design trials of the carrier rocket, has been placed in orbit with the following parameters:

—initial period of revolution—101 minutes;

—apogee—966 km;

—perigee—695 km;

—orbital inclination—75.8 degrees

Further Details of 'Raduga' Satellite Launch

LD2603130993 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1055 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Moscow, 26 Mar—On Thursday, a Proton rocket carrying a Raduga communications satellite was launched from the cosmodrome at Baykonur. On board the satellite is equipment for the relay of telephone and telegraph communications and the transmission of television programs. This was disclosed today by the Flight Control Center.

The Raduga satellite has been put into a near stationary orbit with the following initial parameters:

—distance from the Earth's surface: 36,509 km

—period of revolution round the Earth: 24 hours 33 minutes

—inclination of orbit: 1.4 degrees

The equipment on board the satellite is working normally. The satellite is being controlled by the system of command and measurement.

Supreme Soviet

Supreme Soviet Approves 1993 Budget

LD2503203193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1750 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Yuriy Filippov]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—After a discussion lasting many hours, the Russian parliament today approved the federal budget, having adopted at the second reading a federal law "On the Russian Federation Budget System for 1993."

According to Vasiliy Barchuk, federal minister of finances, the budget deficit will amount to around 6.5 trillion rubles after the amendments adopted today. In a decree on implementing the law on the 1993 budget, adopted today, the Supreme Soviet makes it incumbent on the Federation Government to submit a quarterly report to parliament on the execution of the federal budget system in terms of income and expenditure.

Presidium Session Repeals Social Protection Decree

PM2503114793 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 24 Mar 93 First Edition p 1

[Russian Supreme Soviet Press Center report: "Supreme Soviet Presidium Session"]

[Excerpts] A routine session of the Supreme Soviet Presidium chaired by Ruslan Khasbulatov was held in the Russian House of Soviets 22 March. [passage omitted]

The Supreme Soviet Presidium repealed the decree of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Presidium and Government "On social protection of the population and on regulating the pricing of certain types of output" as having lost force.

Deputies Protest Statements 'Persecuting' Court

OW2503202193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1941 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] During the evening of March 5 [date as received], a group of Russian People's Deputies distributed a statement in parliament in support of the Constitutional Court.

The statement reads that recently, several officials, including the head of the Federal Information Center Mikhail Poltoranin, the president's spokesman Vyacheslav Kostikov, Minister of Press and Information Mikhail Fedotov, First Vice-Prime Minister Vladimir Shumeyko, and certain news agencies have started persecuting the Constitutional Court and its chairman.

These activities are seen as gross violations of the RF [Russian Federation] Constitution and its laws. The authors of the statement have appealed to the prosecutor general to pay attention to "activities by officials who bring enmity and hatred into Russian society by their statements."

The statement was read from the tribune of the parliament by People's Deputy Aleksandr Sokolov, former member of the politburo of the communist party of the RSFSR.

Regional Affairs

Chechen Chairman Says 27 Mar Referendum Called Off

OW2603105193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1030 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO on 26 March]

[Text] Khusayn Akhmadov, Chechen parliament chairman, has told Interfax that the referendum scheduled for March 27 will not be held because the questions on the ballot have been declared unconstitutional by the republic's Constitutional Court. The parliament wanted the people polled on the need to preserve the presidency and to hold pre-term elections of the president and parliament. Akhmadov was nevertheless confident that a vote would take place as soon as 100,000 signatures were collected in support of the referendum.

He said that 90 percent of local administration heads and most political movements and parties want to go ahead with the referendum.

Dismissal of Irkutsk, Novosibirsk Oblast Heads Suspended

LD2503170293 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1500 GMT 25 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] As the Russian presidential administration reports, the publication of the instruction on dimissing the heads of the administrations of Irkutsk and Novosibirsk Oblasts has been suspended. The president has issued an instruction that an additional examination be carried out.

Khabarovsk Territory To Begin Building Army Housing

LD2603105293 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0920 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Olga Aphonchikova]

[Text] Khabarovsk March 26 TASS—Over a thousand families of the Russian armed forces officers, warrant officers and midshipmen, who have been transferred to the reserve of the Far East Military District will be provided with housing over the 1993-94 period.

An allocation of 6 billion 342 million roubles has been made for this purpose in the state budget's "housing" programme framework. About one billion of the said amount has already been received by the territory.

Contracts have already been signed with organizations which will begin construction of various designs of blocks of flats.

Moscow Proposes Changes in Laws on Status of Foreigners

MK2503115093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 24 Mar 93 p 1

[POSTFACTUM report: "Control Over Foreigners"]

[Text] A joint collegium of the governing bodies of Moscow and Moscow Oblast discussed problems related to the stay of foreigners there. Yevgeniy Savostyanov, administration chief of the Russian Federation Security Ministry for Moscow and Moscow Oblast, proposed, in connection with a sharp increase in violations of the rules of entry, exit, and stay of foreign citizens, to appeal to the Supreme Soviet to make additions and amendments to legislative acts in force on Russia's territory that regulate the entry, exit, and stay of foreigners on the territory of the Russian Federation.

It was proposed that amendments be made to the 1981 law on the legal status of foreign citizens in the USSR, and to introduce punitive sanctions for violation of the stay and transit rules to the tune of 50 times the minimum [monthly] wage. Repeated violations will strip commercial organizations, whose business is to invite foreign citizens, of their right to conduct this sort of business.

Moscow Instability Hampers Murmansk Economic Progress

PM2503120593 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1500 GMT 22 Mar 93

[By Valeriy Anuchin and Aleksandr Uchinin from Murmansk; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Excerpt] [Anuchin] People in Murmansk are trying to get on with their work as normal. The sea and fishing ports are functioning. Ships are docking, fish is being unloaded.

But the steady pace of work, on which the well-being of the people living in the north depends, is being hampered by a lack of confidence in the future caused by the unstable political situation in the country. Instead of efforts to achieve civil accord and stabilize the economic situation, we see a shabby power struggle which has little in common with the citizens' vital needs. [passage omitted]

North Ossetia Extends State of Emergency in Prigordnyy

OW2503150493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1418 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] North Ossetia intends to periodically prolong the state of emergency in the populated centers of the Prigorodnyy region even if Ingushetia does not present a petition about prolongation of the state of emergency on its territory.

Well informed sources in the presidium of the North Ossetian parliament reported to Interfax that this move will be undertaken in order to prevent possible clashes between Ossetians and Ingushes.

The term of the state of emergency on the territory of Ingushetia's Nazran region is due to expire on March 31 and the republic's leadership, according to Interfax correspondents in Nazran, does not intend to prolong it. Meanwhile, the North Ossetian parliament has already prolonged the state of emergency in several populated centers of the Prigorodnyy region until May 25.

The deputies of the North Ossetian parliament state that the region's population categorically opposes the agreement on the return of the Ingush refugees reached at the Ossetian-Ingush negotiations.

In particular, Deputy Kazbek Tsakhilov reported in his interview with Interfax on Thursday [25 March] that the

population of the Prigorodnyy region will not adopt agreements reached in Kislovodsk until Russia's leadership does not give a political assessment to the armed clashes which took part last November. Tsakhilov also declared that it is necessary to call those guilty of the conflict. He said that the republic's population will oppose return of the Ingush refugees despite the fact that more than 40 parliament's deputies are conducting explanatory work among the population.

North Ossetia, Ingushetia Discuss Problems

MK2503133493 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 93 pp 1, 2

[Natalya Pachegina report: "Ingushetia Urges Withdrawal of Russian Army. Vladikavkaz Population Opposes Neighborhood With Ingush in Prigorodnyy Rayon"]

[Text] The fifth round of Ossetia-Ingush talks that ended in Kislovodsk last week resulted in the document "On Measures To Provide a Comprehensive Solution to the Problem of Refugees and Forced Resettlers on the Territory of the Ingush Republic and the North Ossetian SSR." The satisfaction with its outcome, expressed by Aleksandr Kotenkov, head of the interim administration in North Ossetia and the Ingush Republic, and by Anatoliy Anikeyev, deputy chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet's Soviet of Nationalities, in conversation with NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA's correspondent is presumably based on the fact that for the first time leaders of both republics have taken part in these talks: from Ingushetia, Ruslan Aushev; and from North Ossetia, Akhsarbek Galazov. Which, however, by itself does not guarantee the solution of the problem. Nonetheless, the basic principle underlying the return of residents to North Ossetia's Prigorodnyy Rayon is the principle of the concentrated settlement of Ingushetians and Ossetians within the district's boundaries. Ways of attaining this will apparently become a subject for discussion at subsequent meetings.

On Sunday [21 March] in Nazran, capital of the Ingush Republic, a routine congress of the peoples of Ingushetia was held. The congress presidium, which had been placed in charge of organizing a presidential election campaign in the republic, tendered its resignation. Ingushetia Republic President Ruslan Aushev was elected congress chairman. He proposed a candidate for the post of republic vice president. Lieutenant General Boris Agapov, former deputy commander of USSR border troops, following congress approval, was elected vice president. The 25-member commission to work out a draft constitution of the Ingush Republic was headed by the president himself.

Another subject of discussion at the congress was the election of the Ingush Supreme Soviet and members of the Russian Supreme Soviet previously set for 11 April by the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet. The congress decided to postpone the elections indefinitely. Their date, Ingushetia's law-abiding citizens believe (this was how Isa Kostoyev, the Russian Federation president's representative in Ingushetia, described his fellow countrymen), can be specified only after the delimitation of state borders with the Ingush Republic which, Nazran thinks, have not as yet been defined on the Ossetian side and along the boundaries with Chechnya. The president and his deputy were instructed to request the Russian Supreme Soviet to postpone the election date.

Owing to the lack of a legislature in Ingushetia the congress adopted "An Interim Statute on the President of the Ingush Republic," which, its authors believe, should be approved by the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet.

Isa Kostoyev, who took part in the congress, expressed the dissatisfaction of the Ingush public with the results of the fifth round of Ossetian-Ingush negotiations. There is a widespread opinion in the republic that there must be no strings attached to the return of Ingush refugees to Prigorodnyy Rayon.

Meanwhile in Ingushetia, as the events of the last three days have shown, an anti-army mood has been growing. It was caused by a tragic incident on Sunday when a drunk Russian Army major, driving an armored personnel carrier, hit a passenger car. Two Ingushetians died on the spot. Criminal proceedings were started against the officer. On 23 March a Russian army officer guarding a post on a highway leading to Nazran (drunk, according to eyewitness accounts) opened fire on a car, wounding two people. On the same day Russian soldiers in an armored personnel carrier tried to release from jail their commander, who had been detained by the local internal affairs directorate. According to Magomed Archakov, press secretary of the Ingush president, the Russian army servicemen were sealed off (but not taken hostage, as the press reported) and they admitted that they had decided to carry out the "operation" on their commanders' orders.

In this connection, the presidential press secretary reported, Ruslan Aushev, after conferring on 24 March with General Kotenkov and Anatoliy Ponomarev, chief of the Ingushetia interim administration troops headquarters, issued orders to abolish Russian Army posts throughout the republic and transfer their functions to the republic's internal affairs bodies. By 31 March, when the state of emergency in the conflict zone is due to be lifted, the Russian army troops, the Ingush president insists, must be withdrawn from the republic.

Meanwhile the interim administration press center has reported shelling (predominantly at nighttime) of Russian army and Internal Affairs Ministry troop posts on Ingushetia's territory.

In Vladikavkaz, where a routine session of the republic's Supreme Soviet opened yesterday, in the square in front of the government building a rally took place whose participants came out against the return of Ingush refugees to Prigorodnyy Rayon. A session of the North

Ossetian Supreme Soviet is to discuss the results of the Kislovodsk talks. The joint document adopted there envisions, as North Ossetia thinks, a step-by-step resettlement of the former residents of Prigorodnyy Rayon and a formal assurance to them (the residents) from federal authorities. The latter measure, Vladikavkaz believes, will to a certain extent guarantee public order in the Prigorodnyy villages that will be revived.

Tatarstan Parliament Discusses Programs, Passes Laws

OW2603105393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1030 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO on 26 March]

[Text] On the final day of its session, the parliament of Tatarstan adopted a group-oriented social program. According to this document, the local authorities will allocate 3.8 Bn [billion] rubles a month to it. At the initial stage, the program will be financed from the budget and subsequently at the expense of higher prices on oil and additional taxes.

The parliament also passed the law on minimum wage which will amount to 4,500 rubles beginning April 1.

During the discussion of the privatization program, the deputies stated that following the introduction of higher coefficients, the cost of Tatarstan's state property had gone from 22 Bn up to 900 Bn rubles. They also pointed out that the cardinal difference between the privatization programs of Tatarstan and Russia was that Tatarstan's property was privatized on the basis of the market price, not the original price minus depreciation (former Soviet price).

On August 1, investment and privatization accounts will be opened at Tatarstan's banks. So in addition to the Russian privatization voucher worth 10,000 rubles, the citizens of Tatarstan will receive an additional 30,000 rubles.

Boris Yeltsin's appeal to the people of Russia was not discussed. Parliament chairman Farid Mukhamedshin said that in the absence of the official document, the leaders of the republic would not discuss the appeal.

Volga 'Deserted'; Ships Without Fuel, Spares

PM2503131193 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 22 Mar 93

[By Yevgeniy Orlov from Volgograd; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] [Orlov] On the eve of the new navigation season, rivermen at the Volgograd port have neither money nor fuel. Unfortunately, the situation is the same all along the Volga.

Normally, at the end of March the first convoys of oil tankers began moving upstream from Astrakhan. Icebreakers used to clear the way for them. This year there is no one to pay for the icebreakers. The Volga is deserted. The Volgograd fleet too is marooned in boat yards, surrounded by ice. The port's debts for last year have topped 300 million rubles. It has not been possible to pay fuel suppliers, and therefore no new deliveries of fuel and lubricants can be expected.

[Ya.M. Petriyenko, port deputy chief] Ships are not being replaced, there are no replacement engines or spare parts, there are no materials, no paint, no metal. I have absolutely no idea how we can extricate ourselves from this situation.

[Orlov] Incidentally, the port itself is also owed money by freight recipients. But, judging by appearances, they are not able to pay up either.

In order to provide passenger transportation it will be necessary to increase the price of tickets 15-fold as a minimum.

People are not waiting for that but are taking up oars. The question is: Will there be enough rowboats to go round, and how far can you get in a rowboat?

Cossack Community Leaders View Don Events

LD2603120293 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1134 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vyacheslav Bondarenko]

[Text] Rostov-on-Don March 26 TASS—"Russia, its state integrity and our society are on the brink of a civil war," says an address to the citizens of Russia, approved on Thursday [25 March] by the Council of Cossack Atamans (chieftains).

The meeting, devoted to the elaboration of a strategy and tactics for the further revival of Cossack communities, was attended not only by Don Cossack leaders, but by envoys from Krasnodar and Stavropol territories, Voronezh and Tyumen regions, Moscow and the Kalmyk Republic, Siberia, Altay, Crimea, the Volga area and the Urals.

The address says in part: "The recent Don events rank among the political events, now shaking our mother country, its power structures, public circles and the Cossacks communities. The mass media is describing the actions of Don Cossacks as extremist and unlawful. But they have not brought to light the true reasons behind the current events. They are to be sought in the fact that the central and local administrations are openly ignoring the resolutions of the Supreme Soviet and the decrees issued by the Russian president. The inactivity of local administrations in several territories and regions have provoked Cossack protests... This refers fully to the head of the Rostov regional administration. We, Atamans,

regard the Don events as a sort of Cossack demonstration, the main purpose of which was to draw the president's and the Supreme Soviet's attention to the lack of a mechanism for implementing the adopted laws and resolutions. Its absence forces the people to seek ways out of the impasse. In light of this, the Ataman Council declares its backing to the actions of the Don Cossacks, intended to achieve the implementation of the presidential decree on state support to the Cossacks and of other legislative acts pertaining to them. It strongly condemns attempts to exploit the Cossacks in the current political confrontation."

The Atamans have also stated that the Cossacks were ready to guarantee stability in the country, to ensure its statehood and the implementation of democratic reforms, but they reserved the right to cut short any attempts to falsify their decisions. "One example of such falsification is the perverted interpretation of the decision adopted by the Don Cossack Assembly to restore the region's status as a subject of the Russian Federation, claiming that another independent republic was being proclaimed. [no closing quotation marks as received] "The Cossacks cannot imagine themselves outside Russia and unconcerned about its interests," the address states.

State Plants May Lose Amenities to Privatization Law

PM2503160993 Moscow Russian Television in Russian 1258 GMT 24 Mar 93

[From the "Business in Russia" program]

[Text] [Unidentified reporter] The military plants, of which there are a great many in the Moscow region, have found themselves completely cut off from the privatization process. Yet in the not too distant past they were some of the wealthiest firms. The equipment that they produced, and are incidentally still making, is truly unique. The Lavochkin Science and Production Association is developing models of the state-of-the-art spacecraft that have been to the Moon and Venus and could in the future help us travel to other galaxies. But, regrettably, while it dreams of the stars the enterprise has to constantly resolve the most mundane of problems.

[Anatoliy Baklunov, general director of the Lavochkin Science and Production Association] So far most industrial enterprises have not resolved the question of ownership, although the foundations have been laid for this to happen.

[Reporter] This should be seen as the root of all the conflicts. Back in 1990 the Law on Ownership was adopted whereby, after paying state taxes, the labor collective would keep some of its profits. The Lavochkin Science and Production Association decided to channel these profits not into raising wages, which would not have been anywhere near world standards anyway, but into building housing, pioneer camps, hospitals, and, as in the past, sociocultural and consumer facilities with their own money. Everything would have taken its own sweet course had it not been for privatization. Since the enterprise is a state enterprise, all its property belongs to the State Committee for the Management of State Property. In view of the specific nature of the Moscow region, where enterprises like the Lavochkin Science and Production Association represent 80 percent of the total, an ordinance was issued signed by Chubays for all housing and nonhousing premises on their books to be handed over to the municipal authorities. They in turn issued their own local edict, one that directly concerned the Lavochkin firm.

The firm was ordered to submit an entire list of its sociocultural and consumer facilities. Handing over the buildings that it built with its meager resources to the city authorities means that these can be privatized at some future date. But where is the guarantee that this mini-cultural center, for instance, whose construction the enterprise is currently completing, will not change its function and become an ordinary commercial store? People at the plant were, however, glad to rid themselves of their function as builders of housing and hospitals. Except that...

[Baklunov] We do not see the kind of force that could build or develop what we do for residents, for members of the labor collective.

[Reporter] The plant quite recently received explanations from Chubays' deputy Dmitriy Vasilyev. He said that transferring the sociocultural and consumer facilities to municipal ownership does not automatically mean that they will leave the plant's jurisdiction. But the problem does at the same time remain open. How can we ensure that enterprises which are not by law to be privatized are nonetheless able to keep some of their property for their collectives?

International Affairs

Foreign Minister on Official Visit to United States

Zlenko, Clinton Comment on Talks

LD2603080193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0735 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Loshchlin]

[Text] Washington March 26—President Bill Clinton met with Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs Anatoliy Zlenko Thursday [25 March] at the White House. Control over weapons, bilateral political and economic relations, and the situation in Russia were at the center of the talks.

After the meeting Clinton told journalists the Ukrainian minister was given the understanding that it is a necessary prior condition of long term fruitful relations that Kiev ratify the START treaty. The president also said the United States very much would like to have close ties with Ukraine. We have great potential in trade, in our country there are many Americans of Ukrainian descent... But we don't need new nuclear states. The United States is trying to reduce its own nuclear arsenal, and we should continue to move in this direction... I think in the longterm outlook the United States will have good relations with Ukraine. But only if we settle the question on the START treaty, Clinton added.

Zlenko told reporters he gave Clinton a personal message from Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, and characterized the talks as "very warm and friendly" "an understanding of the Ukrainian position on START exists", the foreign minister said. "The ratification process has started. Parliamentary hearings are ahead". Zlenko also noted that if Ukraine gives up nuclear weapons, it would like to receive from the United States and other great powers "defined political and economic guarantees."

The Ukrainian foreign minister expressed "concern over the dramatic events" in Russia, and refused to predict the outcome.

"We respect the legislative and executive powers and want them to find a common language", Zlenko said.

Visit 'Productive and Useful'

LD2603105093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1043 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Arkadiy Sidoruk]

[Text] Washington March 26 TASS—Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko, currently on an official visit here at the invitation of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, held a press conference at the Washington National Press Club on Thursday [25 March].

"I believe this visit to Washington was productive and useful for the further betterment of Ukrainian-American relations," he stated. "We have met understanding at the White House, the State Department, the Defence Department and other federal agencies of the new U.S. Administration. They are all ready to cooperate with us," he added.

According to the Ukrainian minister, the current negotiations are devoted to many vitally important problems, including nuclear disarmament, military cooperation, ways to promote broader economic exchanges and other matters. "Our delegation is conducting for two days running busy negotiations with American officials to find the key to our future relations and their formula," Zlenko stressed.

The Ukrainian foreign minister met U.S. Secretary of Defence Les Apsin on the same day. He said their talk was "extremely useful". "I have arrived at the conclusion that the U.S. Defence Department has its own approaches to American-Ukrainian relations," the minister added. He assessed the forthcoming meeting with U.S. President Bill Clinton, scheduled for Thursday, as "proof of his deep respect" for Ukraine and its people.

Replying to an ITAR-TASS question, the Ukrainian minister said: "We are cooperating with the U.S. Administration and leaders of various countries in areas, pertaining to the guaranteeing of our national security in various domains—military, political and several others, including economic. Ukraine has voluntarily declared its intention to renounce nuclear weapons and wants to become a nuclear-free power. Therefore, we need guarantees that our self-defence shall be ensured and that our people's safety will not be jeopardised in the event of possible unforeseeable circumstances. We are focusing our attention on ways to guarantee the territorial integrity of our state, non-interference in our domestic affairs, to ensure ourselves against political and economic pressure, against any use of force. This is approximately the range of guarantees that we want to obtain. We have already reached agreement with the United States, Russia, Great Britain and France," the Ukrainian minister stated.

Politician Advocates Creation of Baltic-Black Sea Coalition

AU2603075693 Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian 23 Mar 93 p 2

[Unattributed report]

[Text] On 20 March, the Congress of National Democratic Forces [KNDS] and Ukraine's Nationwide Rukh held a joint meeting. In his report, KNDS Deputy Chairman M. Porovskyy analyzed the sociopolitical situation in Ukraine. In his opinion, one of the government's mistakes is its attempts to emerge from the crisis while relying upon the assistance of CIS countries where Russia dominates. Russia will never allow Ukraine to become an economically powerful state. M. Porovskyy

advocates the idea of creating a Baltic-Black Sea coalition in which Ukraine would play a worthy role.

Supreme Council Approves Black Sea Economic Cooperation

AU2603092893 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 23 Mar 93 p 3

["Decree by Ukraine's Supreme Council Presidium on Declaring the Creation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation;" issued in Kiev on 15 March; and text of the "Declaration on Creating the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation;" issued in Istanbul on 26 February 1993]

[Text] Ukraine's Supreme Council Presidium decrees as follows:

To approve the Declaration on Creating the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation [BSEC] ratified by Ukraine's Supreme Council Chairman I.S. Plyushch in Istanbul on 26 February 1993.

[Signed] I. Plyushch, chairman of Ukraine's Supreme Council
[Dated] Kiev, 15 March 1993

Heads of parliaments of Albania, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Turkey, and Ukraine, having assembled in Istanbul on 25 and 26 February 1993,

Taking into account the profound and rapid changes that are taking place in the region of the BSEC and in Europe in general that are free of the burden of the past;

Realizing that the time has come to implement the hopes and expectations of our peoples that they have cherished for decades, their decisive dedication to pluralistic democracy based upon basic human rights and freedoms, and their belief that prosperity may be achieved with the help of a free economy and social justice;

Confirming their determination to do everything possible to expand and develop cooperation between their countries in various spheres and at various levels;

For the purpose of

—Creating a legal foundation for the implementation of the goals and principles of respect for human rights and supremacy of law and democratic values that are specified in the Declaration signed on 25 June 1992 by the heads of states and governments of the countries that are members of the BSEC, and also in the Bosporus Statement published at the same time;

—Promoting the implementation of these principles and goals and contributing to their implementation;

—Ensuring that the BSEC's principles and goals are brought to the attention of the peoples of the BSEC member countries and are democratically approved and supported by them and taking into account the important role that parliaments and parliamentarians will play in the BSEC process;

—Developing friendly relations and cooperation among the parliaments and parliamentarians of the BSEC countries and thereby ensuring further strengthening of the atmosphere of trust and good-neighborly relations among their peoples;

—Promoting interaction between the BSEC countries in other international organizations of which they are members;

Agree to create a parliamentary assembly composed of parliamentarians of the BSEC countries and named "The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation" (PABSEC).

The heads of parliaments of the aforementioned BSEC countries have approved the Draft Regulations of PABSEC and also find it possible to submit it for ratification at the first session of PABSEC.

It has been decided to hold the first session of PABSEC in Istanbul in the second half of June 1993. The Declaration is signed
for Albania—by Pjeter Arbnori, chairman of the People's Majlis
for Azerbaijan—by Isa Kamberov, chairman of the People's Parliament
for Armenia—by Babken Ararktsyan, chairman of the parliament
for Georgia—by Vakhtang Goguadze, deputy chairman of the parliament
for Moldova—by Petru Lucinschi, chairman of the parliament
for Romania—by Andrian Nastase, chairman of the parliament
for the Russian Federation—by Nikolay Timofeyevich Ryabov, deputy chairman of the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation
for Turkey—by Husamettin Cindoruk, chairman of the parliament
for Ukraine—Ivan Stepanovych Plyushch, chairman of Ukraine's Supreme Council

[Dated] Istanbul, 26 February 1993

Communist Activities of Russian Parliament Condemned

LD2603121193 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in English 2200 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] The Ukrainian People's Rada [parliament] circulated a statement condemning the Russian Federation's pro-communist-dominated parliament for its attempts to curtail market economy reforms and democratization processes and stage a communist comeback through returning to the old power, to Soviet hackneyed slogans. The statement warns against activities of pro-communists and revanchist forces dreaming of the

USSR's restoration and voices a resolute support for Ukraine's economic reforms and democratization with its prerequisite separation of powers.

Yevtukhov Briefs Diplomats on Talks With Russia

AU2603082693 Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian 23 Mar 93 p 2

[Statement issued by the Press Center of Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kiev; date not given: "A Meeting With Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps"]

[Text] On 20 March, Ukrainian Vice Prime Minister Vasyl Yevtukhov held a colloquy at Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs for representatives of the diplomatic corps. The vice prime minister briefed the diplomats on the results of negotiations that took place in Moscow on 16-17 March between Ukraine and Russia on questions of dividing debts and assets of the former USSR, coordinating prices of gas and its transit, and establishing conditions of free trade between the two countries and mutual offsetting of debts.

Vasyl Yevtukhov stated that the delegations had failed to reach a final agreement during the negotiations and that not a single document had been signed. In particular, the Russian side refused to sign an agreement that would guarantee Ukraine's receiving its due share of the former USSR's assets that have particular importance for building Ukrainian statehood and the economy. At the same time, he emphasized that, at the level of experts, fundamental approaches and possible ways of resolving questions that were on the agenda were specified.

The negotiations between the delegations of the two countries will continue next week.

The vice prime minister answered numerous questions of representatives of the diplomatic corps.

Leftist Forces Hold Pro-USSR Rally in Donetsk

AU2503165093 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 24 Mar 93 p 4

[Unattributed report: "The Leftists Have Become More Active"]

[Text] Last week, in Donetsk, a rally was held in Lenin Square under the slogan "Ukraine in the Commonwealth of Independent States." The action was organized by the local socialist cell with the participation of the "Donbass Intermovement," Ukraine's Civic Congress, the Oblast Council of Labor Collectives, and some other parties and public organizations of the Donetsk Oblast. About 2,000 people gathered under the slogans reading "We Will Defend the Soviets!", "Restore the USSR!", "Free Ukraine Must Be Within the CIS!", "Fascism and Nationalism Are a Threat to Democracy in Ukraine."

Recent events in Russia, undoubtedly, introduced nervousness and bitterness into the Donetsk rally. A representative of [Nikolay] Travkin's party [the Democratic Party of Russia] spoke at the rally. He did not even conceal his defiance of Ukraine's independence.

National Affairs

Kravchuk 'Directive' on Nuclear Policy Commission

AU2503165893 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 24 Mar 93 p 2

["Ukrainian Presidential Directive on the Statute on the Commission for Questions of Nuclear Policy Subordinated to Ukraine's President" and text of the "Statute on the Commission for Questions of Nuclear Policy Subordinated to Ukraine's President;" issued in Kiev on 19 March]

[Text] 1. To approve the Statute on the Commission for Questions of Nuclear Policy Subordinated to Ukraine's President (in supplement).

2. Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers must make a provision in the state budget for 1993 for maintaining the personnel of the Secretariat of the Commission for Questions of Nuclear Policy and specify conditions for the remuneration of its labor.

[Signed] L. Kravchuk, President of Ukraine
[Dated] 19 March 1993

1. The Commission for Questions of Nuclear Policy (henceforth "Commission") is a consultative and advisory body subordinated to Ukraine's president and has been created for elaborating scientifically substantiated proposals regarding the shaping of a nuclear policy.

The following are the main tasks of the Commission:

To prepare recommendations for Ukraine's president on what concerns the shaping of the state nuclear policy and mechanisms of its implementation, including in the military sphere;

—to analyze draft normative acts on questions of utilizing nuclear energy;

—to assess the conformity of concepts and programs for the development of the nuclear energy complex to international requirements and norms;

—to study new design and technological solutions in the sphere of nuclear energy utilization, including international projects that are important for Ukraine, and to elaborate, on that basis, corresponding proposals.

The Commission will function as a national expert for questions of atomic energy utilization and handling of radioactive waste.

2. In its activity, the Commission will be guided by Ukraine's Constitution and laws, Ukraine's Supreme Council decrees, edicts and directives issued by Ukraine's president, decisions adopted by the Ukrainian Government, and international agreements and accords.

3. The Commission will be headed by a chairman who will be appointed by and subordinated to Ukraine's president. The composition of the Commission must be approved by Ukraine's president on the recommendation by the Commission's chairman.

The Commission's chairman will have two deputies who will be elected by the Commission.

4. The main form of the Commission's work will involve meetings that will be held whenever necessary.

5. The organizational provision of the Commission's activity is the responsibility of its Secretariat.

6. Whenever necessary, the Commission may enlist, on a contractual basis, the services of individual scientists and specialists, including those from foreign states, and create groups of experts and consultants for fulfilling tasks entrusted to the Commission.

7. The financial and material and technical provision of the Commission's activity will be provided from the state budget.

Nationalist Assembly Demands Nuclear Status for Country

AU2603075393 Kiev MOLOD UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 23 Mar 93 p 1

[Unattributed report published under the rubric "Fact"]

[Text] A conference under the motto "Ukraine's Nuclear Status is the Best Guarantee for Peace and Security in Europe" was held in Kiev. It was organized and held by the Ukrainian Nationalist Assembly. The nationalists called upon the Ukrainian president to create "Ukraine's Nuclear Committee" and to not join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Supreme Soviet Official Cited on Parliament Dissolution

MK2503131293 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 93 p 1

[Interview with Vladimir Grinev, deputy chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, by Vladimir Skachko; date, place not given: "Today We Have To Change Representative Branch More Often. Ukrainian Supreme Soviet Deputy Speaker Argues for Dissolving Parliament"—first two paragraphs correspondent's introduction]

[Text] One reason for the forthcoming crisis of power in Ukraine along the same lines as the Russian one may be the different political views of the chiefs of various branches of power at all levels. At the same time the top leaders in both Ukraine and Russia prefer not to affiliate themselves formally with any political party.

Vladimir Grinev, deputy chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, was one of the founders of the Ukrainian Democratic Rebirth Party and the New Ukraine association, which hew to liberal-democratic and social-democratic positions and in which he still retains his membership. He told a NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent about his understanding of the general situation in Ukraine.

[Skachko] They say that last year in Ukraine was one of missed chances...

[Grinev] When they talk about missed chances, it is supposed to mean that people did do something, but were also unable to do something. This is not quite so. I believe that last year in Ukraine was a year of establishing and reaching an understanding of what we really are. In this respect, I can tell you that as far as New Ukraine is concerned it does have good prospects: As long as we are going to build a market economy, we will need the New Ukraine association.

[Skachko] And what if the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet in May takes away from the government of Leonid Kuchma the emergency powers needed for carrying out market-oriented transformations?

[Grinev] I think that the government, parliament, and the president of Ukraine should be searching right now for a way out of the situation that might emerge. Unfortunately, I have the impression that none of them is fully aware of the possibility of a crisis in Ukraine in May.

[Skachko] And what happens if the Kuchma government issues an ultimatum: either the continuation of its powers or a resignation? What will the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet do then?

[Grinev] This is, in my view, a special question. Today the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet is not afraid either of resignations, ultimatums, or demonstrations. It has already adjusted to all this. That is why the government should look several times before leaping, for a resignation statement amounts to a serious collision. I am afraid that this government of Ukraine is the last one elected in a normal fashion, and this is why it should be cherished. At the same time, I personally was among the 18 deputies who voted against granting emergency powers to Leonid Kuchma for one reason—I did not perceive a program for which the powers were being given. And today it is not quite clear whether the government's emergency powers should be renewed. But, on the other hand, it is also understandable that only this government in Ukraine can move something toward market reforms. In a word, the powers of the government constitutes a very serious problem. It has to be studied, and consultations among various political forces should start right now.

[Skachko] What is your attitude to the possible dissolution of the Ukrainian parliament?

[Grinev] This parliament should perform two functions—adopt the law on elections and determine the main structural elements of the future state, that is to say, its own structures and the structures of other authorities. In short, this Supreme Soviet must adopt something like a bill on the directions of the state's evolution, but not a new Ukrainian Constitution. After that the parliament can resign, and I am convinced that it will soon understand this. In such difficult historical junctures as this one in Ukraine, the representative branch of power should be changed more often.

Government Council of Entrepreneurs Begins Work

OW2403183993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1711 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Speaking on Wednesday [24 March] at the first sitting in Kiev of the newly-born Ukrainian government's Council of Entrepreneurs, Ukraine's premier Leonid Kuchma said that the government had plans to promote private business.

He expressed dissatisfaction with the slowness of the privatization of small public businesses which can generate a great deal of jobs.

According to Kuchma, he hopes that the council would offer practical aid to resolve privatization problems.

Council chairman Vladimir Sumin emphasized at the sitting that the Council of Entrepreneurs had a stake in a strong national government and would support Kuchma's reform effort.

Sevastopol Leader Briefs Press on Pacts Reached With Kiev

MK2503081193 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 24 Mar 93 p 3

[Aleksandr Pilat report under "Crimea" rubric: "Sevastopol's Special Status. Leonid Kravchuk Does Not Object"]

[Text] As NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA has reported, Sevastopol City Soviet Chairman Viktor Semenov met with journalists. The news conference was devoted to the results of Semenov's trip to Kiev and his meeting with Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk. The questions raised at the news conference are being discussed animatedly in the peninsula's mass media. It is characteristic that even political parties and movements that adhere to a platform of returning Sevastopol to Russia's jurisdiction approve, in principle, of the Ukrainian president's decision.

"It is a question, above all, of the city soviet's economic concept," Viktor Semenov said in conversation with NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA's correspondent. "In accordance with this concept, juridically Sevastopol must be granted a special status. This is conditioned not only by the presence in the city of the Black Sea Fleet's main base and the fact that the majority of its enterprises are geared to the defense industry. There are 53 population centers within the city limits. There are 96,000 hectares of land in the Sevastopol region. The city soviet cannot load concern for Sevastopol onto Crimea. Sevastopol's budget deficit now stands at approximately 34 billion karbovanets. The Ukrainian president promised to allocate subsidies of 25 billion karbovanets to the city to close this gap and 9 billion karbovanets in the form of subventions." The Sevastopol City Soviet head particularly emphasized that his trip to Kiev was not a manifestation of separatism in respect of Crimea but was dictated by necessity. "Sevastopol's special status is not eternal," Semenov emphasized, "and the need for it will fall away as soon as the one-sided development of the city's economy has been eliminated and its integration into Crimea's economy is complete. If Crimea took care of Sevastopol's economy, it would have no need of a special status, but Crimea cannot do this today."

[Pilat] What, in principle, is the city soviet's economic concept submitted to the Ukrainian president?

[Semenov] Above all, a switch to contract relations with the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense. It is also planned to conclude the treaty "On Urgent Measures To Provide the City With Energy Resources and To Develop Its Infrastructure" between Sevastopol City Soviet and the Russian Federation, which will be part of a full-scale treaty on Sevastopol between Russia and Ukraine. We also want to resolve the question of channeling into the city's budget part of the funds obtained as a result of sharing out the Black Sea Fleet ships which are being written off. It is proposed to set up free enterprise zones in the Sevastopol region, such as free ports, free bank enterprise zones, and elite tourism zones. In addition, it is planned to transfer a number of industrial enterprises to the city's communal ownership.

[Pilat] How will relations be organized in the sphere of exchanging goods between Sevastopol and Russia and other CIS countries?

[Semenov] It is proposed to introduce a "state order of rescue" for the output of Sevastopol enterprises, to permit them to export their output duty-free to CIS countries, and also to grant tax-free status to goods imported to Sevastopol from Commonwealth countries. [Semenov ends]

The Ukrainian president took into consideration Semenov's arguments about the need to delimit clearly the functions of the city soviet and the city administration, but he advocated keeping his own mission in the city. Ivan Yermakov, the Ukrainian president's representative in Sevastopol, said in conversation with

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA's correspondent that he had supported the city soviet's economic concept right from the start and that it was thanks to him that the president approved it. "It is gratifying," Yermakov remarked, "that Leonid Kravchuk does not object to the leasing of part of the Black Sea Fleet's main naval base to Russia"—about which, incidentally, the city soviet chairman informed journalists.

It has been learned from informed sources that Sevastopol City Soviet Chairman Viktor Semenov will very soon travel to Moscow, where he will discuss at the Russian Federation Ministry of Defense "military questions concerning Sevastopol, the Black Sea Fleet, and the Ukrainian Navy." Viktor Semenov will have meetings with Russian Federation Defense Minister Pavel Grachev and possibly with Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin.

Belarus

Supreme Soviet Views Judicial System, Status of Judges

WS2503154593 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1300 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Report by Mikhail Rudkovskiy]

[Text] [Rudkovskiy] Deputy Anatoliy Vertinskiy, a well-known Belarusian poet, spoke at the beginning of today's Supreme Soviet session and congratulated deputies on the 75th anniversary of the declaration of the Belarusian People's Republic. However, it turned out that not all the deputies liked Vertinskiy's congratulation. Stanislav Shushkevich noticed this and said that everybody should treat Belarusian history with respect.

During the discussion on miscellaneous issues, Deputy Kachan said that the Communists of Belarus faction had been created in the Belarusian Supreme Soviet. After 30 minutes, the legislature got down to the consideration of the draft laws on the judicial system and the status of judges in the Republic of Belarus. First Deputy Minister of Justice Valentin (Stukalo) made a speech on this issue at the end of the 25 March session. Today, Chairman of the Republican Association of Judges Ivan (Utnik) presented the alternative draft law. What is the difference between the draft laws submitted for the Supreme Soviet's consideration by the Council of Ministers and the Association of Judges? The first draft law determines the principles of the judicial system and the status of judges, while the alternative law deals with the status of judges alone. What caused the difference in the approaches to this issue? I am inviting the Chairman of the Republican Association of Judges Ivan (Utnik) to comment on this.

[(Utnik)] We are firmly convinced that the consideration of the issue of the judicial system is untimely. This law has [words indistinct], but the new constitution has yet not been adopted. With regards to the status of judges, this law is necessary. Its adoption will allow us to avoid exhausting our personnel resources. Competent judges are abandoning courts; a large number of vacancies are appearing. As a result of this, people whose personal and business qualities do not meet the demands of the job, come to work at the court. We suggest that the new law be adopted immediately to prevent the process of disintegration of the courts.

[Rudkovskiy] The version elaborated by the Legislation Committee was chosen as the basis of the new law. My second interview is with First Deputy Minister of Justice Valentin (Stukalo). Are you satisfied?

[(Stukalo)] I think the session made the right choice. The deputies conducted an in-depth analysis of this draft law. In my opinion, it would be wrong to adopt these laws separately. This would only solve part of the problem, but not the whole of it. I am grateful to the deputies for their decision.

[Rudkovskiy] Was the first reading of the draft law adopted?

[(Stukalo)] It was. Deputies expressed a number of remarks and we will take these remarks into consideration when elaborating the final version of the law.

[Rudkovskiy] What is your attitude toward the alternative draft law?

[(Stukalo)] We do not oppose or reject this document. We agree to all its provisions. However, we consider that it suggests a partial solution. Not only material and social guarantees for judges should be discussed; we must think about our judicial system. This is the only way to create the independent court and the state of the law.

Parties, Movements Form Left-Centrist Bloc

LD2503200093 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0550 GMT 21 Mar 93

[Text] A total of 18 Belarusian political parties and movements have united and decided to proceed further together. Among those who have formed the association of left centrist patriotic forces are the parliamentary factions Union [Sayuz] and Belarus, the Movement for Democracy, Social Progress and Justice, the two communist parties of the republic, the Slavonic Assembly, White Russia, and the Lenin Communist League of Young People. Thus, the Patriotic Movement of Belarus has appeared on the political stage.

Journalists found out about it at a news conference. What main principles will characterize the new association? As became known to our correspondent, the Patriotic Movement of Belarus will strive to find for the republic a way out of the crisis without social tension and confrontation as well as to prevent nationalism. At the news conference, support was expressed for the statement of the chairman of the republic's Council of Ministers on the creation of a close economic union.

The leaders of the movements and parties also spoke for the collective security treaty. The main point is that the Patriotic Movement of Belarus promises to implement their tasks within the Constitution and the laws and not to fight with their political opponents.

Further on Bloc

WS2303144493 Minsk BELINFORM in Russian 1254 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Text] An association of leftist-centrist patriotic forces—the Belarusian Popular Movement [BPM]—has emerged on the political scene. The BPM Coordinative Committee has announced this at its press conference. Leaders of 18 Belarusian political parties and movements have expressed their wish to unite, including such forces as the legislative factions "Sayuz" and "Belarus", the Movement for Democracy, Social Progress, and

Justice, two Belarusian Communist Parties, the Slavic Union "Belaya Rus", the Leninist Communist Youth League, and others....

Sergey Gaidukevich, chairman of the Committee for the Social Security of Servicemen, presented the basic principles of the new movement. These are: overcoming the crisis without social tension and confrontation, the prevention of nationalism, and the promotion of close ties within the framework of the renewed union.

"We support the statement made by the chairmen of the Supreme Council and the Council of Ministers on the need to establish a close economic union," said Viktor Chikin, member of the Communist Party Political Committee. "At the same time, we speak out for the necessity of signing a collective agreement on security. We need both an economic and a defensive union."

Ruble Bank Accounts To Be Closed After 10 Apr

PM2503104993 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Mar 93 First Edition p 1

[POSTFACTUM report: "Ruble Accounts Are Being Closed in Belarus Banks"]

[Text] The noncash Russian rubles in accounts in Belarusian banks must be sold on the currency exchange by 10 April, after which all ruble accounts are being closed.

This is stated in a decree of the Belarusian Council of Ministers and National Bank. The exchange rate at the currency exchange will be set by the National Bank. In the opinion of Belarusian expoerts, the mechanism which it is planned to launch 10 April is virtually the last step toward the introduction of its own currency in Belarus.

Moldova

Russian Commander Refuses To Comment on Russian Events

AU2503170293 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1941 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Chisinau, BASAPRESS, 24/3/1993—General Aleksandr Lebed, commander of the 14th Army, refused categorically to comment on events in Moscow while being questioned by a BASA reporter. "As a man and commander of an Army, I would prefer to stay away from any declared position. Why? Simply because I do not know what direction events will take and how they will affect the Dniester Region," concluded General Aleksandr Lebed.

While being questioned in the same connection, Stanislav Khazheyev, minister of defense of the self-proclaimed Dniester Republic, evaded providing a direct answer, stating that the press should leave the Army alone.

Russian 14th Army Takes TV Station Under 'Protection'

OW2503180193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1725 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The 14 Russian army has taken an independent short-circuit television studio "Asket" under reinforced protection. As the army commander, General Aleksandr Lebed has explained on television in Tiraspol, that was done at the studio director Gennadiy Vasilkov's request following frequent cases of blackmail and threats addressed to the "Asket" staff.

General Lebed threatened to deal ruthlessly with anyone, regardless of rank or title, who would resort to such actions. "I will chop their heads off within hours, letting their relatives to complain against me to the UN, CSCE, God, or any other place " - Lebed declared.

In December of 1992, "Asket" concluded with the 14 Army command a cooperation and mutual assistance agreement after the leadership of the self-proclaimed Dniestern republic had tried to block the transmission of programs, citing facts of corruption among Dniestern leaders.

Gagauz Leadership Denies Involvement in Attack on Police

OW2603103193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1030 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO on 26 March]

[Text] An extraordinary joint session of the parliament and government of the self-proclaimed Gagauz Republic will discuss the causes of the unrest in the capital Komrat on Wednesday night. This was reported to INTERFAX by the speaker of parliament, Mikhail Kendigelian. He said on Wednesday evening that several hundred people attacked the building of the Moldovan militia department. Some were armed and threw Molotov cocktails at the building. As a result it burned down almost completely. The fire also destroyed several cars and a store of confiscated goods.

Kendigelian denied the involvement of Gagauz Guards in the unrest. They only prevented a police task force from Chisinau from entering the town, because "the Gagauz republic can restore order on its territory itself."

He said clashes and bloodshed were avoided, although several stores were looted in the chaos.

Kendigelian also said that the attack was triggered by the death of Leonid Tanasov in the preliminary confinement prison. After the man's funeral on Wednesday, his relatives tried to inquire about the cause of death and settle scores with those responsible for it, but they were joined by "criminal elements," the official said.

Chisinau Using Dniester Experience To Build Army

OW2503144993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1419 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Moldova needs an army of a new type, with a structure, armaments and defense methods different from the Soviet ones, Moldovan Defense Minister Pavel Creanga told the weekly Oasta Moldovei. He said that the Moldovan Defense Ministry used the experience gained during the conflict in Dniester to develop new principles of building the army.

According to them, the armed forces will consist of two basic parts—the regular troops, whose mission is to ensure the country's defense capability, and the territorial, serving to defend the population inside Moldova.

Pavel Creanga also announced that the Moldovan Defense Ministry is planning to open the first military college in Moldova.

Snegur Comments During Meeting With Norwegian Envoy

AU2503154893 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1941 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Chisinau BASAPRESS, 24/3/1993—The appointing of the Norwegian Ambassador to his position will lead Moldova to a new level within the European Community and between states, stated President Mircea Snegur during today's ceremony of accreditation of Rolf [Strole] Andersen, Extraordinary and Highly Qualified Ambassador of the Norwegian Kingdom in Moldova. According to the communique of the press service of the presidency, President Mircea Snegur asserted during his dialogue that the legislation in force in Moldova does not undermine human rights, offering to citizens the possibility of fully affirming themselves, regardless of nationality. While referring to the process of privatization to which they will proceed in the near future, President Snegur stated that anyone attempting to break the legislation will be prosecuted. Mircea Snegur stated that the national currency will be introduced into circulation during the first half of this year. The President of Moldova stated that by the end of March a mission from the EC for resolving the conflict in the eastern regions of Moldova will arrive in Moldova.

Today, in addition, Rolf Andersen, the Ambassador of Norway in Chisinau, had a meeting with Divisional General Pavel Creanga, the Minister of Defense of Moldova, and Nicolae Costin, the Mayor of Chisinau.

'Illegal' Privatization of Defense Enterprise Alleged

AU2503165293 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1941 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Chisinau, BASAPRESS, 24/3/1993—The newspaper of the Russian minority NEZAVISIMAYA MOLDOVA [Independent Moldova] reports that the illegal privatisation of military equipment is taking place in Moldova. The Moldovan Ministry of Defense cannot exert judicial control over "Sport and Technique" enterprise which was previously financed by the Ministry of Defense of the USSR. This unique enterprise is engaged in repairing, servicing and delivering military equipment and prepares specialists of average class in Moldova. By the initiative of the staff this enterprise was transformed into a shares company. From another perspective the Council of the Ministry of Defense on the pages of the same article denies establishing a private company. The Council declares that "Vichi" firm is a state enterprise and was primarily organized to supply the National Army with military techniques. This activity is quite difficult in the present day conditions of the market economy.

Hope for 'Compromise Solution' in Relations With Dniester

PM2503123393 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 20 Mar 93 First Edition p 2

[Report by Svetlana Gamova: "Moldova Parliament Chairman Meets With Dniester Region Leaders"]

[Text] Chisinau—Talks between Chisinau and Tiraspol have switched to a higher level. There was a meeting between the top people in Moldova and the Dniester Region administration.

P. Lucinschi, chairman of the republic parliament, and Prime Minister A. Sangheli discussed with Left Bank leaders I. Smirnov and G. Marakutsa questions relating to the definition of the region's status and a number of sociopolitial and economic problems. According to information from press services, there was also a discussion of the fate of a group of prisoners, members of the Tiraspol branch of the Moldovan People's Front, accused by the Dniester Region Prosecutor's Office of committing terrorist acts before the outbreak of hostilities in the region.

The conversation took place behind closed doors and journalists were told only that it had been agreed to hold the meetings regularly.

But on the eve of the meeting two events occurred that are of no mean importance for the fate of the decision. Moldova's parliament adopted a decree bringing to an end the discussion of the draft Constitution in its first reading. It notes that the "status of the republic's eastern areas will be determined by a special constitutional law."

On 9 March the presidiums of the Supreme Soviets of the Dniester Region and the Gagauz south made a joint

statement suggesting to Chisinau the commencement of tripartite talks on the formation of a democratic state on the territory of Moldova, in which equal rights will be ensured for the three members of the federation—Moldova, Dniester Region, and Gagauzia.

Despite the mutual reproaches and ultimatums, the negotiating process between Chisinau and the Dniester Region is nonetheless under way and there is the hope that the sides will achieve a compromise solution.

Chisinau Mayor, UN Official Hold Talks on Humanitarian Aid

AU2503154693 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1941 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Chisinau BASAPRESS, 24/3/1993—Today, Winston Temple, the permanent representative of UN in Moldova has visited the Mayor's office in Chisinau. During his meeting with Nicolae Costin, the Mayor of Chisinau, Winston Temple agreed to offer his services as a mediator of humanitarian aid for ordinary people as well as for the services of the Mayor. The Mayor's Economic Council, together with interested organizations, continues to elaborate the project of utilization for the UN's humanitarian aid. He also proposed to get in touch with all the countries donating assistance and on the basis of the program elaborated by the Mayor in Chisinau to establish concrete assistance concerning this help.

'Strict Regime' on Electricity Supply for Enterprises

AU2503170093 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1941 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Chisinau, BASAPRESS, 24/3/1993—In Moldova, a strict regime over the supply of electricity for enterprises and organizations was introduced. The corresponding decision, adopted by the Government of Moldova, demands a reduction by 50 percent in the consumption of electricity for the illumination of streets as well as the restriction on hours of daily work in shops of industrial products and cultural and sport institutions. While being quested by BASA Agency, Valeriu Iconicov, chief of the State Department for Energy Resources, stated that "Economical consumption and the economisation of electric energy in all possible ways could somehow soften the energy crisis which Moldova is now crossing."

A similar decision regarding the strict regime of the electricity supply was adopted by the government of the self-proclaimed Dniester Republic on the 18th of March.

Tiraspol Women's Leader Threatens 'Strike'

AU2503170893 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1941 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Chisinau BASAPRESS, 24/3/1993—Tiraspol's Executive Committee did not provide its permission for a strike organized by the Women's Committee for Dniester Defense which is planned for 4 April. Svetlana Migulea, the chief of the Women's Committee declared to the city's authorities that she will strike against the Government of the self-proclaimed Dniester Republic demanding the dismissal of Aleksndr Seldakov, the Minister of the Local Industry, Vyacheslav Zagryadskiy, the chief of the bank of the self-proclaimed Dniester Republic, Vadim Shevtsov, the Minister of Security of Tiraspol and Nikolay Matveyev, the vice-Minister of Interior from Tiraspol. Aleksandr Ziasipanli, the head of the Executive Section of Tiraspol, in his interview with BASAPRESS correspondent asserted that this strike will not be considered legal as long as Svetlana Migulea has not obtained official permission and lacks approval from the Tiraspol authorities.

Kazakhstan

Government Concerned Over Situation in Russia

LD2503152093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1511 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Fedor Ignatov]

[Text] Alma-Ata March 25 TASS—Asked why the Kazakh leadership did not react to the political crisis in Russia, a high-ranking Kazakh official, who refused to be identified and is close to President Nazarbayev, said: "Silence also signifies a response, a position."

"The events in Russia worry the republic's leadership," the official said, "but one should think now of the way out of the deep economic crisis rather than of the power struggle. People's forbearance has its limits."

"The disputes and arguments between branches of power used to take place in Kazakhstan, too. But they have always been resolved through consultations. I think discretion will prevail in Moscow, too," he said.

Khasbulatov Visit to Alma-Ata Described as 'Botched'

PM2503115793 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 23 Mar 93 First Edition p 7

[Correspondent Sergey Skorokhodov report under the general heading "Chronicle of Interrupted Visit"]

[Text] Alma-Ata—The aircraft carrying R. Khasbulatov and the Russian parliamentary delegation headed by him landed in Alma-Ata just as President Yeltsin was speaking on television. From that moment on, the schedule for the visit was rapidly cut short. Tashkent and Bishkek were dropped. And even in Alma-Ata the delegation held a lightning 50-minute meeting the next morning with members of the Supreme Soviet Presidium. R. Khasbulatov held brief talks with Speaker S. Abdildin and President N. Nazarbayev, and flew to Moscow two hours later.

The visit was botched, V. Voronov, deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet for deputies' powers and human rights, commented on the meeting with Presidium members, which was held behind closed doors. Briefly describing the aims of his visit, R. Khasbulatov stressed that he was wearing two hats—as chairman of the Russian parliament and as head of the CIS countries' Interparliamentary Assembly. The visit had to be cut short because of B. Yeltsin's speech.

The chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet refrained from commenting on the president's speech, but noted that the statement contained nothing good for Russia and that the greatest danger was that political confrontation would switch to the regions.

R. Khasbulatov was optimistic about the Interparliamentary Assembly, citing the European parliament as an example.

Security Council Discusses Preventing Corruption

OW2503185793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1725 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In Alma-Ata on Thursday [25 March] the Kazakhstan Security Council met behind closed doors under the presidency of Narsultan Nazarbayev to examine the issue of corruption prevention.

The "Interfax" correspondent was informed at the President's press-bureau that the Chairman of the parliament, the vice-president, the Prime minister, the Chairman of State Financial Supervision, the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Prosecutor General and State advisors participated in the meeting. They noted, according to the press-service, that since the issuance on December, 4 1992 of the decree on "Additional responsibility of state administration officials for discipline, public order and security", the structures of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Prosecutor's Office and the Committee for National Security have administered several successful investigations.

As it was previously mentioned serious crimes had been revealed in the sphere of state administration, including the ministries of Foreign Economic Relations and Agriculture, state corporation "Balkhashmed", and one of the largest banks-"Turanbank". Several officials have been taken into custody.

Nazarbayev Economic Cooperation With U.S. Businesses

OW2503173393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1632 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Report by diplomatic correspondents Andrey Borodin, Dimitry Voskoboynikov, Igor Porshnev, and others; from the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Wednesday evening [24 March] President Nazarbayev had talks with the leaders of major American companies, the Dresser Industries and Chevron.

He told the Dresser Industries' Executive Director John Murphy that cooperation with American businessmen would facilitate Kazakhstan's economic recovery. With reference to the American business quarters, John Murphy said that in Kazakhstan the situation was more favorable for foreign investment than in Russia. Unfortunately, we were delayed at the start and lost time, he said. To quote John Murphy, the Dresser Industries company may supply Kazakhstan with oil and gas-industry equipment and know-how, and help it train

personnel. In return Americans will participate in geological prospecting in Kazakhstan and set up joint ventures.

On the same day, Nazarbayev met with President of the Chevron corporation Kenneth Derr on the agreement dealing with the establishment of the Tenghizshevroil joint venture. This agreement is to be signed on April 1. Kenneth Derr told journalists after the talks that certain technical problems would have to be settled by April 1. He said, however, that he was satisfied with the talks and was convinced that all problems would be solved.

President Nazarbayev attaches enormous importance to cooperation with Chevron. He said that Kazakhstan had managed to conclude a contract of international standing, all of which enhanced the Western business quarters' trust in it. He also stressed that all of the Tenghizshevroil products would be exported and that the hard-currency income would strengthen the state budget.

IF [INTERFAX] Note: On May 18, 1992, the Chevron corporation and the government of Kazakhstan signed an agreement on the establishment of a joint venture. According to the agreement which is intended for 40 years, Chevron's share in the joint projects amounts to 50% (Chevron will take part in the development of the Tenghiz and Korolevskoye oil deposits, and prospect a territory of about 4,000 square kilometers). Taking into account the taxes and royalties to be paid to Kazakhstan, 80% of the income will go to Kazakhstan and 20% to Chevron. The initial capital investment in the joint venture during the first three years is estimated at about $1.5 Bn [billion]. The aggregate investment over the entire 40-year period may amount to about $20 Bn.

Problems in Chevron-Tengiz Deal Explored

MK2503134893 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 93 p 3

[Sergey Kozlov article under "Kazakhstan" rubric: "Chevron in Hurry To Drill. Kazakhstan Engineers Offered $100 a Month"]

[Text] A recently created consultative council will now tackle the final terms of a $1 billion contract between Kazakhstan and the U.S. Chevron Oil Corporation. Its headquarters will be located in the town of Kulsary at the center of Atyrau Oblast's Tengiz oilfield. The council will be headed by Ravil Cherdabayev, who was previously first deputy to Sagat Tugelbayev, head of the Atyrau Oblast Administration.

To all appearances, the oil deal is nearing completion, although many questions which arose earlier or which have appeared recently in connection with this contract remain unresolved. Alma-Ata officials and Chevron management are seeking to strike a bargain as quickly as possible, without bothering about shedding light on many of these "dark places."

Officially, the final obstacle is the lack of a law on oil, which will be discussed at the end of March at the 10th Kazakhstan Supreme Soviet session. Will they adopt the law and sign the contract?

"Many people in our oblast are infected with the 'Arab syndrome,'" Boris Sokolov, adviser to the head of the Atyrau Administration and director of the Foreign Investments Department, said. "People here want to become the Emirates as quickly as possible. This is a ridiculous and ruinous delusion. Nobody has any intention of helping anyone. Chevron intends to carry out super-exploitation here. The leadership of Atyrau Administration takes an extremely negative attitude toward the conclusion of this contract, because they virtually disregard us."

This can be seen even from the allocation of the "money for contract" (bonus). Alma-Ata is to get $50 million right after the signing of the document, and Atyrau $10 million a year over five years. Why? "Kenneth Derr [name as transliterated], president of the Chevron Corporation, has repeatedly heard hard-hitting things from us," Sokolov continued. "Recently, quite recently, he heard literally the following: 'If you want to deal with Alma-Ata, then drill there, but here please be so good as to reckon with us.'"

In need of high-class specialists, Chevron is looking for employees among local cadres. An engineer must speak three languages (Kazakh, Russian, and English), know how to work with a computer (including an English version), and at the same time reckon on a maximum wage of $100 a month. "Not even the British in Singapore took such a liberty," Boris Sokolov commented on this offer.

Aleksandr Kozachkov, agent for the head of Atyrau Administration in Alma-Ata, believes that the conflict stems from the fact that there was no competition in respect of Tengiz. "I believe that this contract must be torn up, since it is unacceptable to us in this form," Kozachkov said. Possessing great practical experience of oil extraction, he said that his rejection of the deal is based, above all, on Chevron's refusal to process the attendant gases—pentane, hexane, and propane—which would bring Kazakhstan a tremendous profit. Vladimir Dumchev, who is known in Atyrau as Chevron's representative in Kazakhstan, had assumed that all the documents relating to the contract would be ready in the very near future, possibly by 1 April. "The fundamental questions have been resolved, and there is now just a small delay over the working documents," he said.

That's for the visible part of the deal. But if we try to "drill a little deeper," we come to dark voids and silences. Nevertheless, I still managed to make out some things.

Not only is Kazakhstan's major asset—the unique Tengiz oilfield—being handed over for decades to come to a firm whose reputation in the world is far from irreproachable, but it is being handed over without a

search for other partners. The history of the contract's conclusion abounds with a multitude of uncertainties. For example, what is the role in it of John Doys [name as transliterated], president of the Oman Oil Company, a world-famous oil broker, and a former Dutch subject who lives in Bermuda? He was an intermediary at the ta' s between Oman and the Kazakhstan Council of M...isters in November 1991 through May 1992 (Oman is acting in this deal as a guarantor between Kazakhstan and Chevron).

Doys and Shekli, his closest assistant, spent six months buttering up many senior officials of the Kazakhstan Council of Ministers. John Doys got his way—it is planned to lay a trans-Asiatic oil pipeline from Tengiz to the Persian Gulf.

It cannot be claimed that there is no connection between Chevron's development of the field and Doys' activity. The agreement on Tengiz was signed 18 May 1992, and right after that, in June 1992, the basic intergovernmental agreement on a pipeline consortium was signed between Kazakhstan and Oman.

At first sight it is strange that Chevron itself did not set about implementing the pipeline project, but this was evidently not advantageous to Doys: According to the consortium's charter documents, Doys is a full member of it, owning 25 percent of class A shares; in other words, he has the right to adopt and block decisions. He also claims his share of the transport tariff. But what does he contribute to the overall business? A promise to gather together $1 billion in loan funds for the pipeline as guarantees for the governments of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Russia and for the "Chevron-Tengiz" project.

The press has already written repeatedly about the terms of the Tengiz contract, although few people have noticed another considerably significant aspect of the problem: The contract has never been subject to an expert ecological appraisal, and it is the persistence of those who are trying to conclude it so rapidly that is to blame for this.

Tajikistan

Russian Commander Denies 'Rumors' About Border Excursions

LD2603105793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1032 GMT 26 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Dushanbe March 26 [dateline as received]—The Commander of Russian Border Troops in Tajikistan, Major General Vitaliy Gritsan, called rumors about a soon expected large scale breakthrough of the Tajik-Afghan border by anti-government forces ungrounded. In an interview with ITAR-TASS, Gritsan said the opposition does not have either the strength or means for such an operation.

Nor did the general exclude the attempt of a border breakthrough by separate armed forces to commit acts of terrorism or sabotage in Tajikistan in an attempt to destabilize the situation in the republic.

Opposition leaders based in Afghanistan, Gritsan believes, are very interested in keeping both the government and population of Tajikistan tense.

Gritsan said the present situation at the border is under control, although a contingent of soldiers there needs to be reinforced. He expressed regret that, despite the agreements in Minsk about strengthening the Tajik-Afghan border, only Russia is fulfilling its obligations, having sent about two thousand troops there.

The commander confirmed that Russian border troops will fulfill their military duty and guarantee security of the border area entrusted to them.

Deputy Premier on Defense Agreement With Uzbekistan

LD2503231093 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1312 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By TIA KHOVAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Dushanbe, 25 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Uzbekistan will defend Tajikistan's air space in accordance with the treaty on cooperation. Mukhammad Said Ubaidullayev, deputy premier of the Tajikistan Government, said this in an interview today for the "JUMHURIYAT" ("THE REPUBLIC") newspaper. He reported that the country's government is today paying particular attention to strengthening the Tajik-Afghan border so people can live and work in peace. The republic is being given concrete help in this by the Russian Federation, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. A special border troops directorate has been formed under the Tajikistan Committee for National Security [CNS].

Taking part in guarding Tajikistan's state border are a CNS special brigade and two of the country's Defense Ministry battalions. The energetic steps taken by the government, in the opinion of Mukhammad Said Ubaidullayev, will ensure a peaceful life in all regions of Tajikistan in the near future.

Government Delegation Tours War Damaged Areas

OW2503213693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1943 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Tajikistan's Prime Minister Abdumalik Abdullodzhanov, leading a government delegation, began a tour of the Khatlon region on Thursday [25 March]. The purpose of the trip is to comprehensively study and analyze local problems, plan measures to eliminate the effects of fighting in the region, and give it practical assistance.

The delegation includes representatives of all diplomatic missions accredited to Tajikistan and chiefs of the UN missions, monitoring the situation in that Central Asian republic.

Rakhmonov Welcomes Return of 100,000 Refugees

LD2403143893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1147 GMT 24 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Dushanbe March 24 TASS—Refugees continue to return to the Hatlon region of Tajikistan, the epicentre of the recent armed confrontation. These people had found temporary asylum in the Tajik capital, in Leninabad region and in some Uzbek districts bordering on Tajikistan. Today they are eager to return to their homes, to their war-ravaged native land.

According to official Hatlon figures, over 100,000 highlanders have already returned to the region. They are being supported financially, provided with temporary housing and foodstuffs. Chairman of the republic's Supreme Soviet Imamali Rakhmonov, parliament members, and chairman of the Tajik People's Front Sangak Safarov visited the area on Tuesday [23 March]. Welcoming the return of refugees, they assured them once again that the authorities would guarantee them complete personal freedom and all attempts to persecute them for ethnic or other reasons would be cut short most resolutely.

"The enemies of the Tajik people will not be able to split our nation apart and to provoke new disorders," Safarov told a meeting in the regional centre of Kurgan-Tyube.

Armenia

Minister on Oil Find, Reopening Nuclear Plant, Gas Pipeline

NC2503191193 Yerevan Radio Yerevan International Service in Armenian 1630 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] State Minister Sepuh Tashdzhyan has spoken on Armenian Television's first program. Tashdzhyan supervises the activities of the Energy and Fuel Ministry and the Ministry of Underground Resources. He appeared on television following press reports that large oil and gas deposits have been found in Armenia.

According to Tashdzhyan, detailed studies of the research, which foreign experts have also scrutinized, are encouraging. The exact amount of deposits remains to be determined, but oil is there.

The state minister also reported that preliminary talks are being held with relevant foreign organizations to start trials and test boring in the next few months.

Tashdzhyan believes the Armenian nuclear power plant must be opened to get the republic out of the energy-fuel crisis. He also thinks a new modern nuclear power plant must be built. The government is taking practical steps to start operating the Armenian nuclear plant again. This became possible following an Armenian parliament decision last week, annulling its 1991 decision to resolve the issue through a referendum. With that, the Armenian Government assumed the responsibility for reopening the nuclear plant and guaranteeing its secure operation.

The minister also declared that preliminary agreements on building the gas pipeline from Iran to Armenia will be put out to tender. Then construction will start. According to him, the pipeline's route has been decided upon and the cost has been put at around $50 million. Tashdzhyan said he hoped the gas pipeline might be constructed within a year.

EBRD Provides Loan To Build Hydropower Station

OW2503191293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1418 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Interfax has learned at the press center of the Armenian government that the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) approved on Wednesday [24 March] a decision to allocate a $57.4 Mn [million] loan to Armenia in order to complete the construction of the fifth power unit of a hydro-power station at Razdan.

In February, the issue of this credit was addressed in London during the talks between Armenia's State Minister Sepukh Tashchyan and the EBRD directors. In order to finalize the credit, it has to be ratified by the Armenian parliament.

Azerbaijan

Khasbulatov for More Ties Between Parliaments

PM2503114193 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 23 Mar 93 First Edition p 7

[Arif Useynov report under the general heading "Chronicle of Interrupted Visit"]

[Text] Baku—Saturday's [20 March] meeting between R. Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet, and Isa Kamberov, speaker of the Azerbaijani parliament, has made a special mark on Baku's busy political life. This was the first direct contact between the leaders of the two states' parliaments, even though cooperation between the two countries' parliamentarians has already been organized. The groundwork was laid last fall at a meeting between Russian and Azerbaijani parliamentary delegations. Azerbaijan is also sending its own observer to the session of the CIS countries' Interparliamentary Assembly.

The essence of the talks—to sum up the results of the brief meeting, where parliamentarians and representatives of both sides' state organs were represented—boils down to a joint desire by the sides to deepen parliamentary ties and make them businesslike and constructive.

And Ruslan Imranovich drew journalists' attention to two aspects of this situation. First, the fact that parliamentary ties between Russia and Azerbaijan should be more intensive and dynamic—which will benefit matters. The range of mutual interests is vast, as is the range of interests affecting the sides. Questions of economic cooperation and parliamentary participation in it are now particularly acute and topical in Russo-Azerbaijani relations.

The speaker of the Russian parliament also touched on the need for a speedy resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Parliamentarians have not fully come to grips with this, which places upon us a responsibility to be concerned, R. Khasbulatov stressed.

Foreign Ministry Gives Note to Russian Envoy on Lezghins

NC2503210693 Baku AZERTAC in Azeri 1450 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Baku, 25 Mar (AZERTAC)—Azerbaijan's Deputy Foreign Minister Albert Salamov handed a note to the Russian Federation's roving ambassador, Gennadiy Konenko. The note says the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry considers the objectives pursued by the Lezghin "Savdal" (Union) society as gross intervention in Azerbaijan's internal affairs.

The note adds that the leadership of the "Savdal" society, which is bent on creating a "Lezghistan republic" in the rayons along the Russian-Azerbaijani border where the Lezghins of Dagestan and Azerbaijan are concentrated, have, in cooperation with the Lezghin

National Council, recently stepped up its unauthorized rallies at the time when beneficial multi-sided relations are developing between Azerbaijan and Russia.

These rallies are disrupting the work of the customs services and are creating tension in this region, as yet untouched by conflict.

"Savdal's" activities are provocative in nature and are directed against the territorial integrity of both Russia and Azerbaijan.

The note expresses Azerbaijan's concern over the way incidents are developing and says it hopes the leadership of the multiethnic republics—that is, Russia and Dagestan—will say something on this issue. A well-considered policy on such a delicate matter as interethnic relations is urgently needed in Russia and Dagestan.

Republic Lezghins Rally With Russian Lezghins

LD2503161593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1510 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Gadzhi Shamov]

[Text] Makhachkala, 25 Mar—Over 10,000 people assembled for a rally which took place today on the border between Dagestan and Azerbaijan, not far from the customs post on the Samur River. Lezghins from Makhachkala, Derbent, Kaspiysk, Baku, and Sumgait had come there to take part in it.

The issue of the unification of the Lezghin people in the two republics was placed in sharp focus at the rally. As long ago as the past century, the Lezghin people chose to ally themselves with Russia. It was stressed that the reinforcement of the border along the Samur River, where border troops are being billeted, is continuing.

The participants in the rally adopted an appeal to the presidents of Russia and Azerbaijan. The peaceful march of the Lezghins was met by the Azerbaijan OMON [detachment of Special Purpose Militia]. Fortunately, there were no incidents.

Armenian Attack on Zangelanskiy Rayon Said Repulsed

NC2503193193 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1700 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Azerbaijan's military units repulsed an attack by armed Armenian units in Zangelanskiy Rayon today. The Defense Ministry Information Service has informed an AZERTAC correspondent that the enemy units violated Azerbaijan's border and attacked (Sayikhly), [placename indistinct], and (Sherifan) last night. Thanks to the retaliatory measures taken by the Azerbaijan Armed Forces, the enemy units were evicted from the republic's border after losing several men and armored vehicles. The Armenian Armed Forces subjected the border towns in Kazakhskiy and Kedabekskiy Rayon to intense artillery fire yesterday. Efforts are under way to determine the number of casualties.

Clashes are currently taking place in Agderenskiy Rayon near Magavuz.

Bridge in 'Oil-Rich Area' Damaged by Explosion

NC2503193293 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1700 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] The bridge near (Umit), an Azerbaijani town near the Georgia-Armenia railway in Marneuli Rayon, has been damaged by an explosion again. Experts believe repair work will take two months.

The destruction of the bridge is one of the most serious incidents to take place. The incident was undoubtedly aimed at creating tension in that oil-rich area.

Situation in Ganja 'Tense'; Guseynov Meets Officials

NC2503155293 Baku TURAN in English 1047 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Baku (March 25) (TURAN)—The situation in Ganja remains tense. The supporters of the former Commander of the Second Corps of Azerbaijan Army Suret Guseynov refuse to obey the authority's order of surrender.

As it was reported the talks with S. Guseynov are conducted by the State Secretary Panakh Guseynov. Today the Councellor of the President Nadzhaf Nadhzafov arrived to Ganja for direct contacts with S. Guseynov.

The major demand of the rioters remains the concession of security guarantee to S. Guseynov.

Yesterday the vice-commander of Transcaucasian army units of Russia arrived to Ganja from Tbilisi. The arrival of the high rank of Russian Army is associated with that a part of soldiers of the 104th Russian landing divisions located in Ganja decided to render a military assistance to S. Guseynov and his supporters.

In spite of the tension all the city enterprises and organizations function well.

Acting Prime Minister Denies Claims of Support for PKK

NC2503173493 Istanbul MILLIYET in Turkish 23 Mar 93 p 12

[Report by Barcin Yinanc: "For Azerbaijan, the PKK and Armenia Are the Same"]

[Text] Antalya—Acting Prime Minister Ali Masimov has denied a claim by Kurdish Workers Party [PKK] leader Abdullah Ocalan that Azerbaijan supported his organization. Masimov said they saw no difference between the PKK and the Armenians. He asserted: "For

Azerbaijan, the PKK and Armenia are the same. Any move against Turkey's territorial integrity is also a move against Azerbaijan."

Ali Masimov is in Antalya to attend the congress of Turkic states and communities. Replying to MILLIYET's questions on Abdullah Ocalan's recent statements, he said: "The Azerbaijani Government does not support terrorist organizations. Nor will it in future."

Recalling that Azerbaijan complies with international law, Masimov asked: "How can a state that is trying to establish a democratic republic support a terrorist organization?"

Azerbaijani Ambassador to Turkey Mehmet Nevruz oglu Aliyev has described Ocalan's statement as a provocation. Saying that Azerbaijan supports the views of Ataturk [founder of Turkey] and Turkey's territorial integrity, he said: "Turkey's enemies are Azerbaijan's enemies."

Musavat Party Says Membership in PFA 'Inexpedient'

NC2503134693 Baku TURAN in English 1043 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Baku 25 March (TURAN)—Party Musavat considers collective membership in People's Front of Azerbaijan [PFA] as inexpedient, it said in the statement, spread by the management of the party. It is marked in the statement that conducting of the policy, independent of PFA, is of determine importance in the cause of formation of structural and organizational bodies of Musavat.

This statement is the reaction of Musavat for decree of Chairman of PFA Abulfaz Elchibey from 9 March. It is spoken in the statement that parties and political organizations of the PFA must determine in the shortest time if they will be collective members of the PFA or not.

Party Musavat, liquidated in 1920 year by Bolsheviks, was recreated in November 1992. A number of members and supporters reaches 5,000 men. Despite its small number, observers foretell it to be of one of the leading in the political life of the country.

Musavat is called as the most intellectual party because there are 1500 professors and teachers of high educational institutions, 140 scientists and about 100 representatives of art and culture in its staff.

Musavat comes forward for the building of democratic society with balanced orientation to East and West.

Head of the parliament Isa Kamberov was elected in November 1992 the chairman of the party.

Georgia

Shevardnadze Article Backs Yeltsin Stand

PM2503162293 London THE EUROPEAN in English 25-28 Mar 93 p 7

[Article by Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze: "We All Want Our Hero Yeltsin To Stand Firm"]

[Text] I do not want to say that I am a fortune-teller, but I have been warning of a coup d'etat by the reactionary forces of Russia for some time.

The process, in the form of a parliamentary coup, began at the Seventh Congress of People's Deputies in December. I had two opportunities to warn President Yeltsin of this danger. A coup would threaten world peace. If it happens, we will all have to deal with the revival of the Cold War.

The classic elements of a coup attempt appeared during the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies in March. In my opinion, President Yeltsin was slow off the mark to counter those elements. He should have taken a tough position with the hardliners at the end of last year—not last weekend. It seems to me that Yeltsin, like Mikhail Gorbachev before him, has underestimated the risk of a coup.

The stakes in Russia are frighteningly high now. The outcome of the struggle in Moscow will determine the fate not only of the democratic process in Georgia, but in many other countries, too. I listened very carefully to President Yeltsin's speech at the weekend. I think his stance is late in coming, but it is the only tenable one.

Yeltsin has the right to go to the country because he is a democratically elected president. This gives him a crucial advantage over the Congress and parliament.

The disagreements between the president and the vice-president cause anxiety. But judging by the president's speech, I had the impression they shared the same position.

The people of Russia must ally themselves with Yeltsin now; it was the people who chose him as president and entrusted to him the fate of their country. If the struggle between the president and law-making bodies becomes critical, Russia will find itself in chaos, with a very real danger of civil war.

The smell of civil war is already in the air in Russian cities, and this should be taken seriously in Moscow. One must have faith in the wisdom of the Russian people. As one of the initiators of the democratic movement in Russia, I am well acquainted with the way in which the forces of democracy move there. I know that they are able to unite quickly and act effectively when necessary.

That was how it was during the August coup. At that time, I was in close contact with Yeltsin. We stood on the barricades together. Yeltsin has become the hero of August. We all want him to stand firm.

People should know that the empire has not yet been destroyed. The second stage of the destruction will be even more painful and dramatic than the first. But, as I told U.S. Vice President Al Gore recently, I have faith in President Yeltsin's strength and ability to push through democratic reforms. I have said the same thing to other western and eastern colleagues.

If Russia follows President Yeltsin, civil war can be avoided. As chairman of the Georgian parliament, I am ready and willing to establish working contacts with him in any form, to meet and overcome this crisis.

Many people suggest that President Yeltsin has contravened the constitution. That may be true. However, I repeat, he has been elected by the people, and it is important that we remember that the current Russian constitution was drawn up and adopted in a different age. Yeltsin's stand has enormous significance for the future of Russia, for the future of Europe, and for world peace.

Ardzinba Meets Rutskoy, Backs Khasbulatov Supporters

LD2503152593 Tbilisi CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY in Russian 1302 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] It is learned from reliable sources that [Abkhazian Supreme Council Chairman] Vladislav Ardzinba held a conversation with Russia's Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy. The conversation touched on Abkhaz-Russian relations. Vladislav Ardzinba sincerely expressed his support for the stance of the group of deputies supporting Ruslan Khasbulatov. On behalf of the so-called Abkhaz government, he promised Rutskoy he would support his stance at the crucial moment.

Russian Officers Explain 'Justified' Strategic Interests

MK2503123493 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 93 p 3

[Guga Lolishvili report: "Russia Is Not Going To Take Away Black Sea From Georgia. Press Conference at Headquarters of the Russian Federation Group of Forces in Transcaucasia"]

[Text] Taking part in a press conference were Major General Boris Dyukov, deputy commander of the Russian Federation Group of Forces in the Transcaucasus; Colonel Gennadiy Dolgachev, head of the press center of the group of forces; and Colonel Vasiliy Pelchenko, deputy commander for work with personnel, who stated that the press conference's objective was the "desire of chiefs of the Russian Group of Forces in the Transcaucasus to inform the people of Georgia and the peoples of the whole of the Transcaucasus about the situation that has taken shape around the Russian troops."

Rumors of disintegration of the Transcaucasus Military Okrug, Pelchenko said, do not correspond to reality. Despite the increased incidence of raids on Russian military installations, Russian troops in the Transcaucasus, according to him, exist and are functioning, helping the republics to form their national armies.

Answering a question from your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent on whether Georgia is viewed as a buffer zone for Russia, Dyukov stated that the task of Russian troops in the Transcaucasus is primarily to protect their southern borders against a potential enemy.

Regarding the statement by Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev on strategic interests in Georgia, Col. Pelchenko stated that this does not mean that Russia is going to take away the Black Sea from Georgia; these interests, however, are justified and they do exist. Maj. Gen. Dyukov advised that Russian troops in the Transcaucasus continue to hand over armaments to Georgia. As regards the turning over of combat units with all of their armaments, according to Dyukov, one division has become part of the Georgian Armed Forces. Thirty-four military compounds are supposed to be turned over before the year's end. Dyukov stated that relations between the Russian troops and Georgia's leadership are complicated by the fact that no agreement had been signed between Georgia and Russia on the status of Russian troops.

Regarding the Russian Su-25 plane shot down several days ago in the Georgia-Abkhazia conflict zone, Dyukov and Pelchenko said that it had been on a training flight and did not carry missiles that could enable it to strike at ground targets. They found it difficult to answer, however, whether there was any need to continue Russian Air Force training flights in close proximity to the Georgia-Abkhazia conflict zone.

As for the Russian Defense Ministry seismology laboratory in the settlement of Nizhnaya Eshera, according to Dyukov, it contains valuable equipment, and Russia is interested in keeping a small unit of its troops there to protect it.

Armed Forces Report Successes in Abkhazia 25 Mar

AU2603094393 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0800 GMT 26 Mar 93

[Text] Here is information that we received this morning from the press center of the Georgian Armed Forces located in Sukhumi.

Yesterday, positional battles were taking place at the Gumista River with the use of submachine guns. The enemy's snipers were active.

At 1800, the enemy tried to bomb our positions. The 23d Brigade and Tbilisi military police combatants destroyed an armored vehicle with rocket grenades. The aggressors were forced to withdraw their remaining combat equipment from the front line.

Throughout the night, there were minor positional battles at the Gumista River.

During the evening, a ship was observed near the Sukhumi [word indistinct] that was heading in the direction of Akhali Atoni [Gudauta rayon].

At dawn, the enemy brought two tanks up to the front line and tried to shell our positions. Georgian Armed Forces artillery men opened fire at the tanks and forced them to withdraw from the front line.

At present, there are no active combat actions taking place.

This morning, we received information from Ochamchira that, during the night, the enemy launched a lengthy offensive on our positions near the village of Labra and tried to surround one of our subunits. However, following the timely arrival of reinforcements, the enemy retreated. There were no casualties on our side. Combatants from Tbilisi's [National] Guard and military police particularly distinguished themselves in this battle.

This morning, there are no combat operations taking place in the vicinity of Ochamchira.

Official Accuses Abkhazians of Atrocities

LD2503205293 Tbilisi CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY in Russian 1302 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] [No dateline as received] Aleksandr Kavsadze, chairman of the Republic of Georgia's Committee for Human Rights and Interethnic Relations, has sent a message to the Abkhaz people remaining beyond the Gumista River.

It says, in particular: "The war is inspired by enemies of the Georgian and Abkhaz peoples. In the name of the Gudauta group, Russian Air Force planes are bombing Sukhumi. Representatives of the Gudauta group, in alliance with Russia, are fighting against Georgia. However, victory is not theirs. People are coming to the committee with stories of inhuman ruthlessness being used by Abkhazian combatants and mercenaries against the civilian population, of Georgians being deliberately driven out from the land of their forefathers, their homes burned down. People are being taken hostage and forced to work as slaves.

"The tragedy of Gagra, Leselidze, and Gantiadi with mass killings of Georgians, will be a stamp of shame on the culprits' descendants."

Mr. A. Kavsadze said in conclusion: "I want mercy and forgiveness to be our mediators. Let us sit down at the negotiation table. Both peoples are perishing. No glory can compare to the value of a human life."

State Council Ratifies Friendship Treaty With Turkey

LD2503230293 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1355 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Igor Gvritishvili and Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 25 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—The Georgian parliament today ratified the treaty on friendship, cooperation, and good-neighborly relations with Turkey. This is the first time it has ratified such an act. In the very near future the parliament will be presented with other treaties for ratification, the treaties which Georgia has so far concluded with its neighboring states—Iran and Azerbaijan.

Shevardnadze Security Enhanced Due to Assassination Threat

OW2503142893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1417 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Georgia's military intelligence has received "serious information" pointing to a possible attempt on the life of Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze. In view of this, measures will be taken to enhance Shevardnadze's security, Chief of the Georgian Information Intelligence Service, Irakly Batiashvili, told Georgian parliament on Wednesday [24 March].

He also said that the intelligence service had concentrated on the investigation of a series of subversive acts in the Marneuli region. Certain progress has been made already, he said. One saboteur, who exploded the railway bridge on the night March 23 was detained, he added.

Batiashvili believes that subversive operations in this region will continue until Georgia establishes a securely protected border with Armenia and Azerbaijan, and railway bridges and gas pipelines are put under proper protection.

Cabinet Discusses Plan To Introduce Coupons

OW2503213593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1943 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Georgian cabinet discussed on Wednesday [24 March] night the possibility of introducing coupons in the republic. There has been a dire shortage of cash, which, as Tbilisi says, has not been coming from Moscow for 4 months now. This situation has adversely affected the payment of wages, pensions, allowances, and stipends.

The draft decision on coupons which the national bank of Georgia has submitted to the government has come under thorough scrutiny.

The cabinet decided to forward the draft to Parliament, for its possible debate on Friday.

As the national bank's president Demuri Dvalishvili has told Interfax, the coupons that have been printed in Britain will be in circulation simultaneously with the ruble. Their face value - 5, 10, 50, 100, 500, 1000, 5000, 10,000. The coupon and the ruble will be in 1:1 proportion.

Georgia has paid $115,000 for the first batch of coupons. A total of $1 Mn [million] have been set aside for

printing coupons to ensure their circulation before a national currency is introduced.

Parliament Passes Law on Citizenship

LD2503233993 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1151 GMT 25 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Igor Gvritishvili and Albert Kochetov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 25 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—The law on citizenship of Georgia was adopted by the republic's parliament today. The basis of it is taken as the so-called "zero variant," that is, that all those who are resident in the republic at the present time acquire citizenship unless they reject it in written form within three months and as long as they sign the citizenship oath of Georgia.

Estonia

Foreign Ministry Head Meets With Russian Journalists

OW2603110493 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1100 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO on 26 March]

[Text] The Estonian Foreign Minister Trivimi Velliste declared that instability in Russia negatively affects development of the Russian-Estonian political, economic, and cultural contacts.

On Tuesday [23 March] evening, during his meeting with a group of journalists representing Russian press and information agencies in this republic, the Minister expressed his support to Russia's democratic forces and President Boris Yeltsin under the present crisis of power.

Responding to our Baltfax correspondent concerning attitude of the Estonian government to the appeals of the republic's several political organizations to break negotiations with Russia due to "their fruitlessness," the Minister said that he disagrees with this point of view.

Even if the negotiations are too slow and even if our relations are not the best ones, the process of a dialogue is creating at least a channel of communication.

According to Velliste, "the absence of a political force which could demonstrate its will and to move negotiations from the deadpoint under the present crisis situation is the main obstacle in the negotiation process." Velliste said that the most complex problem at the bilateral negotiations is the issue on borders. As it is known, Estonia advocates preserving of borders fixed by the bilateral Tartu treaty dated 1920 which stipulates that several territories, now in the composition of Russia, belong to Estonia.

In this context all other issues including withdrawal of Russian forces, citizenship, and economic relations, the minister said, "seem much simpler."

Japan's Territorial Claims With Russia Supported

OW2503213293 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1953 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Estonia is supporting Japan in its territorial contention with Russia, Estonian Foreign Minister Trivimi Velliste said on Thursday [25 March] during his meeting with Japan's Ambassador Ichiro Otaka.

During the meeting, the parties touched on the situation in Russia and the issues of security of either country due to that, a spokesperson for the Estonian foreign ministry told Baltfax.

Union of Citizens Demands Revision of Constitution

OW2603110693 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1100 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO on 26 March]

[Text] The Union of Citizens of Estonia, a party whose members form the bulk of the Citizen of Estonia opposition parliamentary group, having six of the 101 seats, has announced its intention to start collecting signatures under a petition demanding amendments to the Constitution, and the electoral and citizenship laws.

Juri Toomepuu, chairman of the Union of Citizens of Estonia and the parliamentary group, told Baltfax that the union stands for direct presidential elections, a new procedure for parliamentary elections taking better account of the will of the people, and tighter regulations for naturalization.

Toomepuu believes the present government should be dismissed, and a new, coalition government be formed representing all principal political organizations and movements.

The union hopes to collect between 100,000 and 200,000 signatures under its petition. An amendment to the Constitution can be made if three-fifths of parliament vote in favour of it.

The Union of Citizens of Estonia, set up in 1992, demands that the present Estonian Republic become a complete legal successor to prewar Estonia, and that the "invaders and their descendants" be given no political rights.

Trade Unions Call For Week of Vigorous Actions

OW2503185493 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1736 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A working people's organization in the north-east of Estonia made a call on Thursday [25 March] to hold a week of vigorous trade union actions across the country.

As the chairman of the Narva-based trade union center Vladimir Alexeev has told a Baltfax correspondent, the campaign is planned for the end of April on the threshold of the Day of International Working Class Solidarity. According to the sponsors, the week will start with meetings at enterprises to be followed by regional conferences on common problems and will culminate in massive May Day demonstrations.

Mr. Alexeev stressed that the unions did not intend to make poliltical demands or urge people for anything illegal during the campaign. All actions will be peceful and will be carried out after official permission and in line with the laws of the Estonian republic.

In Mr. Alexeev's words, the north-eastern union's proposals have been supported by the republic's unions of computer makers, electric technicians, machine builders, and miners.

Lithuania

Brazauskas News Conference on Russian Talks' Delegation

LD2503144993 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1055 GMT 25 Mar 93

[News conference by President Algirdas Brazauskas; Kazimieras Bobelis, chairman of the Seimas Foreign Affairs Commission; and Virgilijus Bulavas, chairman of the Lithuanian state delegation for negotiations with Russia; with introduction by unidentified press attache in Vilnius—live]

[Excerpts] [Press attache] Today the president received the newly composed state delegation for the negotiations with the Russian Federation. This morning the president received the old delegation, and I expect that now the president will present the chairman of the new delegation and describe the delegation's tasks.

[Brazauskas] Good morning. The introduction has been made and I will continue. This morning I invited the old delegation; we had a lengthy talk. I listened to their proposals; we consulted. [passage omitted] I hope the same proposals will be conveyed by the head of old delegation, Mr. Stankevicius, to the new delegation. This transition is very important and necessary. Today there are only three members of the old delegation on the list of the new delegation. They are: Vytautas Sinkevicius, deputy head of the juridical department of the Seimas; Vidas Navickas, deputy minister of economy; and Eugenijus Nazelskis, deputy minister of national defense.

May be it will be clearer if I read the list of the new delegation. They are: Virgilijus Bulavas, head of the delegation, Seimas member, he is a man from Kaunas, from the technological university, a lecturer. The delegation also includes Leonardas Kestutis Jaskelevicius, Seimas member and chairman of the Budget Finance Committee; Saulius Kapoka, head of the branch of constitutional law at the police academy; Romualdas Kozyrovicius, a prospective ambassador to Russia—I could not sign a decree on this today because we are waiting for approval by the Russian Foreign Ministry; Nikolajus Medvedevas, Seimas member; Vytas Navickas, deputy minister of economy; Eugenijus Nazelskis, first deputy minister of national defense; Gintautas Treinys—who today or tomorrow will be appointed deputy chairman of the Board of the Bank of Lithuania; Danius Rumskas, deputy minister of industry and trade; Vytautas Sinkevicius—I already mentioned his duties.

Thus there are 10 persons. The old delegation consisted of 14 members. I do not think we are going to be limited—the delegation will have to be increased, but the basis is there. We proposed to Jarasiunas, member of the opposition, that he take part in the delegation, but he refused. I think that people from the opposition should take part. [passage omitted] We will propose to the opposition that it name their candidates in order to increase the delegation. [passage omitted]

[INTERFAX correspondent] A question to the new head of the delegation: How do you imagine the transition, which will be your main issues?

[Bulavas] We are going to ensure the transition by various means. Some people of the old delegation remain. We talked with former members who no longer belong to the delegation, we had very friendly conversations and they assured us that they would pass on to us all the information. Our aims will not change. Of course, we will have to assess the situation, which has changed since the last meetings, the political situation has changed. It is not clear how it will change these days. We think that we will be able to find a common language between the two states.

[LIETUVOS AIDAS correspondent] Mr. President, did you discuss the composition of the delegation and the resumption of the negotiations with Ambassador Obertyshev last Sunday [21 March]? Why during the formation of the delegation was the [word indistinct] principle violated?

[Brazauskas] First, I did not discuss the composition of the delegation with Obertyshev, and I am not prepared to do this. This is the affair of our state. On the whole, the rumor which is hanging in the air that there has been some demand to form a new delegation from that side is only a rumor. There have been no demands in writing, or verbally, or in proposals. And I do not see any violation of the principle of appointment. As a president, in consultation with the government, I make a decision. People not belonging to the government are in this delegation; they are from organizations whih are not subordinated to the government. I think that previously it was not correct. I have here only a decision signed by Mr. Abisala, not even a government decree, on the formation of the delegation. I think that such a decision must be made at a higher level and I am sure that the signing of this decree is in my competence.

[PAP correspondent] As far I understand, there is no representative of the Foreign Ministry in the delegation. Why?

[Brazauskas] We discussed this issue with Foreign Minister Gylys and reached a conclusion that a group of people, together with Vytas Navickas, the minister of economy, including experts from the Foreign Ministry, will deal with these issues. As you noticed, the future ambassador, Mr. Kozyrovicius, is taking part in the delegation, and he will correspondingly represent the Foreign Ministry.

[Lithuanian Radio correspondent] I would like to ask about cooperation with Latvia and Estonia. As you know, last week the Estonian prime minister stated that

because of the economic policy of the Lithuanian government, there are no prospects for tripartite agreements. Do you agree with this?

[Brazauskas] I definitely do not agree. We do not press upon them our economic policy and, I think, they will not press upon us their policy. But there are common interests: energy issues, transport, communications, the Via Baltica issue. They are our common interests and we must solve them together. I think that his statement does not mean that we or they refuse cooperation.

Seimas Committee Opposes New Choices for Russia Talks

LD2503162093 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1305 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Seimas Foreign Affairs Committee members' statement read at a Seimas plenary session in Vilnius by Seimas member Algirdas Saudargas—live]

[Text] Esteemed Seimas members, I wish to read you a statement by members of the Seimas Foreign Affairs Committee.

On 27 January of this year the Foreign Affairs Committee approved a proposal by the acting president, Algirdas Brazauskas, to increase the composition of the delegation for the negotiations with Russia with new members. Such a conclusion was reached by the Foreign Affairs Committee after a long and exhaustive discussion, having listened to a report by the delegation for the negotiations with Russia and with the approval of the Foreign Ministry.

The statement by the Foreign Affairs Committee expressed the aim, and I quote, to make use of the experience of the present Lithuanian delegation, end of quotation, stressing, and I quote, the special importance of the continuity of the Lithuanian-Russian negotiating delegation, end of quotation.

It was stated, and I quote, that the increased size of the delegation should not influence Lithuania's basic political and legal stand in the negotiations, end of quotation.

Thirteen members of the committee taking part in the meeting voted for this statement. The chairman of the committee, Dr. Kazys Bobelis, generalized that thus the Foreign Affairs Committee expressed its confidence in the delegation. This was achieved by the accord of all the political forces in the committee.

Unfortunately, on 24 March of this year, Foreign Minister Povilas Gylys, at a meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee, submitted a completely new list of members of the delegation on behalf not of the president, but of the Foreign Ministry. The new composition of the delegation was approved by five members of the committee, the LDLP representatives, and also by Kazys Bobelis and V. Pleckaitis, thus unlawfully revising the unanimous previous decision by the committee.

We state that with these actions the Foreign Affairs Committee was used to cover up a political decision by the excutive power and that the lack of principles by the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Kazys Bobelis, contributed to this. The aim of this unnecesary procedure of the meeting was to reduce the responsibility of President Algirdas Brazauskas in changing the Lithuanian delegation and policy.

We remain with the previous stand agreed by the committee, and distance ourselves from the actions by those who divide us and from the new decision. We regret that confidence has again been harmed.

This statement is signed by committee members Saudargas, Zingeris, Petrauskas, Landsbergis, Jermolenka, and other members whose signatures will follow.

Brazauskas on Economic Cooperation With Estonia

OW2503212993 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1951 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas said he disagreed with the view of Estonian Prime Minister Mart Laar who is skeptical about the prospects of cooperation with Lithuania.

Laar had repeatedly said Lithuania's economic policy makes less likely the chance of a tripartite economic agreement between the three Baltic states.

"I beg to disagree totally with such a statement (Laar was speaking in an interview with Baltfax) because we do not impose our economic policy on them, and I hope nor will they," Brazauskas said at a news conference in Vilnius on Thursday [25 March].

At the same time, the Lithuanian leader does not see such statements as an indication of Estonia's refusal to cooperate with his country. Brazauskas reaffirmed Lithuania's readiness for wide-ranging cooperation with the other two Baltic states.

He said the Baltic states had plenty of common interests including power-engineering, transport, communications and the "Via Baltica" highway all of which must be implemented together.

Gylys, Estonia's Laar on Baltic Economic Agreement

WS2503153493 Tallinn BNS in English 1236 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Vilnius, Mar 24, BNS—Estonian and Lithuanian officials exchanged a battle of views Wednesday [24 March] after Estonian Premier Mart Laar said he saw no prospect for a trilateral economic agreement among the Baltic states.

Laar said Friday that the economic policy of the Lithuanian government left no opportunities for the tripartite treaties.

"I was quite surprised by the text of Estonian Premier Mart Laar's statement, received through BNS channels," countered Povilas Gylys, Lithuanian foreign minister, at a press conference Wednesday.

Lithuania's general line is to cooperate with Estonia and Latvia in every possible way, he said. "There are no signs of disintegration," so far.

But in a separate interview with BNS Wednesday, Laar reiterated his earlier position, stressing that economic policy of Lithuania makes prospects of trilateral economic agreements look unrealistic. However, he said that Estonia is interested in Baltic cooperation in foreign policy and defense.

Laar toned down his statements by saying Estonia wants to transition from trilateral to bilateral agreements. "Trilateral declarations on free trade etc. simply do not work."

Because of political similarities and geographical closeness, Estonia first intends to conclude a free trade agreement with Latvia, he said. "Which does not mean Estonia desires no such agreement with Lithuania."

But other Estonian officials remained more true to Laar's original comments.

"Our relations in the economic sphere are hampered by the domination of market system methods in Estonia and government ones in Lithuania," said Priit Kolbre, director of Estonia's International Economic Relations department.

Lithuania tried to smooth its transition to a market by applying market elements to a government-subsidized economy, pointed out Kolbre. Now it lags behind even Latvia on its monetary policy.

Other Estonian officials agreed Wednesday that the processes of economic reform and the economic policy in Lithuania complicate the conclusion of trilateral accords among all three Baltic states.

Urmas Reitelman, press-secretary of the Foreign Affairs Ministry, added that Estonia remains cautious about Lithuania's all-pervasive subsidizing in agriculture and the increasingly sluggish tempo of privatization.

Lithuania's Gylys concedes that Lithuania lags behind Estonia in certain fields, especially the monetary policy. "Basically, the central bank did not carry out any monetary policy," he said. "The banking infrastructure was unprepared for the transition to a market economy."

This hindered cooperation, he said, and the discontent of the two other Baltic states was evident.